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THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST.

THE
LIFE OF CHRIST,
A P O E M:

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN

BY THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY,
VICAR OF EPWORTH IN LINCOLNSHIRE,

Father of the late Rev. and venerable JOHN WESLEY :

CORRECTED, ABRIDGED, ENLARGED BY MUCH
ORIGINAL MATTER, AND PRESENTED TO THE
PUBLIC IN AN ALMOST ENTIRE NEW DRESS,

BY THOMAS COKE, LL. D.
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR DR. T. COKE,
AND TO BE HAD OF THE REV. MR. BLANCHARD,
14, CITY ROAD ; AND
Of all the Methodist Preachers in Great Britain and Ireland.

1809.

A. PARIS, PRINTER, TOOK'S COURT.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Poem, which is here presented to the reader, was originally written by the Rev. SAMUEL WESLEY, the venerable parent of the late Rev. JOHN WESLEY, whose extraordinary life has rendered his name more universally known than that of his father. It was first published towards the close of the seventeenth century, and soon passed through more than one edition. This, which is now before me, was printed in 1694. For some time it obtained no inconsiderable degree of notice, from those who feared God, and felt an attachment to the interests of the gospel; but having lived its day, it retired into the shades, and remained in that condition almost forgotten and unknown. More than a century has now elapsed

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since the mantle of oblivion has been drawn over it; and but few, perhaps, comparatively speaking, know that such a poem ever existed.

The interesting title which this volume bore, and still continues to bear, was that which first excited my attention, and induced me to examine and analyze its several parts. On opening it, the Pindaric stanzas which begin the VIth book (but which now make the conclusion of it,) and assert the divinity of our Lord, were the first which claimed my attention. And being forcibly struck with the boldness of thought, and propriety of expression, which the poet had there introduced on the most sublime of all occasions, I was induced to examine the whole with greater earnestness, than the promiscuous perusal of any other parts would probably have excited. For in the prosecution of this disquisition I had the mortification to find, that the execution of the work at large, instead of bearing a resemblance to that part which first caught my eye, almost formed a contrast with it. And if nothing further had appeared to reward me for my toil, the volume would

have been again consigned over to that oblivion in which I found it. The event, however, proves that this was not the case.

The subject itself, of which the poem professed to treat, was awfully important, and could not fail to be in the last degree interesting. The life of our blessed Lord, I was convinced, furnished an inexhaustible fund of the richest materials; and displayed a variety of scenes which gave room for the poet to introduce every virtuous and vicious passion, and to exercise his utmost powers to excite those hopes and fears which operate so powerfully on the human mind. These valuable materials I found the poet had carefully collected, with a sedulity that surpassed my expectation; and arranged them with a degree of art, that nothing but the hand of a master could reach. In surveying the character of Christ, as here delineated, no remarkable incident of his life, from the cradle to his cross, was found to have been omitted: nay, if we even take a still wider range, every event of moment was noticed, from the espousals

of his mother, to his resurrection from the dead, and final ascension into glory. Within this extensive compass, the scenes which were unfolded presented a surprising diversity. The miracles of our Lord supplied what was truly great and wonderful; and his parables, and plain discourses, furnished an excellent ground-work, as well as the most incontrovertible axioms, for such departments of the poem as were didactic and ethical. Of these facts, the beatitudes, which are introduced into the IVth book, afford the most convincing proofs. In his humility and glory—his sufferings and patience—his temptation and conquests—his weakness and power—we behold such amazing contrasts as fable cannot supply, and such as no one less than the Son of God could realize. To bring these subjects before the reader, the poet had introduced a variety of characters. These were so judiciously selected, and so admirably arranged, as to suit with poetic exactness their respective stations, and perform the parts which they were called to fulfil. This made way for the numerous

episodes which appear, and which were evidently designed to afford pleasure as well as to impart instruction.

But the life of Christ, being closely connected both with time and eternity, presented to the poet an occasion to draw aside the curtain which divides the visible from the invisible world. In consequence, both heaven and hell are permitted to burst upon us;—the former to ravish us with its glories, and the latter to alarm us with its terrors. Hence angels and devils pass in review before our eyes;—relate what is past—discover their conditions and employments—perform their respective actions, and retire. In this sublime and extensive process, the allegories of our Lord served as connective links, and were introduced to illustrate those truths which the various personages declared. Hence nothing, however wonderful, was improbable; nothing was extravagantly astonishing; and nothing appeared either more awful or more glorious than we were prepared to expect, because the existing powers to which the various actions

were ascribed, were always adequate to the accomplishment of those deeds which were performed.

But, few contrasts, amidst the brilliancy of these scenes, appeared more conspicuous, than that which the design of the work, and the execution of it, exhibited. The former discovered a mind as comprehensive as the scheme which it had formed; and the latter, a crudity of expression which gave to the lines a disgusting appearance, and an offensive sound. The numerous abbreviations of words, which, in combinations that might easily be attained, would have been rendered wholly unnecessary—the barbarous accentuation to which others were obliged to submit—the unreasonable disproportion of expletives, which were introduced to preserve versification at the expence of harmony and elegance—and the numerous triplets, and unmeaning alexandrines, which neither gave vigour to the sentences, nor terminated the sense of them,—were defects of a nature sufficiently important to outweigh those excellencies which could not fail to charm. To

these may be added the obsoleteness of numerous terms which sprinkled the work with an affected hoar of antiquity, while it injured those ideas which were intended to be conveyed;—the contraction of some subjects which should rather have been amplified than curtailed;—and the dilation of others, that might have been wholly suppressed without occasioning any deficiency. And finally, in many instances, the characters were badly supported, and in several places the poet so sunk beneath his original, that he actually impaired that beauty which his admirable design might invite him to endeavour to improve.

On comparing those excellencies with these contrasted defects, I found much to admire, and much to condemn. The former admitted of little amendment, and required no commendation; and the latter scarcely allowed of apology. The great difficulty, therefore, consisted in separating the ore from the dross—in preserving the design, without perpetuating its wretchedness of execution. This separation is now attempted; but on the manner in which it is accomplished, it is not for

me to decide. On certain points, however, I feel myself at liberty to speak; and conceive that I only discharge a duty in complying with the requests of all who have a right to ask—"What parts of the work remain entire, and what changes have the others undergone?"

The original plan of Mr. S. WESLEY remains unaltered, except in the VIth book. The very long conversation between Gamaliel and the Centurion concerning the Heathen mythology, and the debate between St. James and St. Paul (then persecuting Saul of Tarsus) on the Jewish traditions, are entirely dropped. They discover great learning and ingenuity, but are very tedious, and more proper for a treatise in prose, than for a poem. These circumstances have obliged me to make several alterations in the division of the Vth and VIth books. In every other respect the original design has neither received additions nor suffered diminutions. Every character is preserved, and no new one is introduced to bear the others company. These fill the places they originally filled, and sustain their primitive relations to

one another. Hence the Contents which precede each book, the VIth excepted, are preserved, without undergoing any alterations but such as are of a verbal nature. A considerable part also of the Notes which were subjoined to each book, continue nearly as they were. Many however have been expunged, because the changes which have been made in the versification have rendered them totally unnecessary.

In the poem itself, however, the variations are considerable. Most of the triplets have been destroyed, and most of the useless alexandrines have been reduced to the common standard of heroic measure. The numerous expletives have been discarded. For abbreviated words, others of a full sound have been substituted; and none have been either retained or introduced, that would not bear their proper accents. The obsolete phrases which occurred have been set aside, unless some obvious circumstance pleaded in their behalf; but these instances have been very few. Such subjects of investigation as appeared irrelevant—such allusions as were local—such comparisons as were indiscreet

—and such illustrations as were deemed unappropriate, have been rejected. And where a redundancy of expression had been employed on topics that were unimportant, it has been contracted, to bear a proportion to the article under consideration. These are circumstances which have led to the introduction of changes that in the aggregate have been very considerable. But there is another incident which has tended still more powerfully to swell the additions that have been made.

The amazing magazine of materials which the author had collected, seems to have opened upon him with greater rapidity than he was capable of bearing, and to have profusely poured out more stores than he was able to adjust. His thoughts frequently outran his expressions; and sometimes so crowded themselves in a single line, that they obscured each other, or buried themselves in the shadows which they raised; on which account they presented to the reader, at the first view, little less than a mass of confusion. Of this the author appears occasionally to have been aware. Hence in many places the more prominent features only

were touched; while such as were of a more diminutive nature were passed over in total silence. This method of proceeding prevented indeed the former error from recurring, but it tended to introduce others which were equally injurious to the performance. By this mode, the propositions became straggling; and, for want of those intermediate links, which should have connected the whole together, the paragraphs, sentences, and lines, appeared to teem with insulated facts. These circumstances rendered it necessary to divide those clusters which crowded upon each other, and to supply those deficiencies which had been strangely occasioned by redundancy.

Through these causes the poem (the VIth book, of course, excepted) has been considerably enlarged, notwithstanding the excisions which have taken place. Each book has received an addition of lines; several, of some hundreds; so that the whole has acquired not less than two thousand, besides those which have supplied the places of such as have been lopped off. Besides these lines which are additional, others are equally new, even

where the original ideas have been rigidly preserved. For it frequently happened, that the removal of a barbarous or prosaic line induced an alteration in those which were connected with it; and this oftentimes continued till the recurrence of some strange abbreviation renewed the necessity of a change. On these accounts, very few of the original lines are now standing. Those parts which are pindaric, form the principal exception; but these are very small. In most other respects the versification may be said to be new; and the thoughts, which were originally in the poem, are placed in such combinations, as appeared to express the ideas intended to be conveyed by them in the most perspicuous manner; so that in some places a transposition even of whole paragraphs has been made. In short, it is an old poem cast into a new mould.

Whether, through these alterations and additions, the poem has acquired any advantages which may be deemed considerable, is a question which others must determine. The writer flatters him-

self, that on a comparative estimate they will be found not unworthy of regard. But he does not profess himself to be a particular favourite of the muses. Parnassus is a mount which he never intended to ascend. His tale on the present occasion is short and simple. He saw this poem of Mr. Wesley, the plan and design of which he thought to be excellent, but the lines appeared to be very bad. He has therefore endeavoured to mend what he has preserved, and to supply what he thought to be deficient.

But though he may not have succeeded equally to his wishes, the importance of the subject he hopes will apologize with such as have the interests of religion at heart, for its being again presented to the world. If these receive benefit by what he has done, the consideration will heighten his satisfaction, as much as it will lessen his solicitude about the opinions of the rest of mankind. It is with a design to promote the spiritual welfare of the pious that he has revised the present work, and to them it is primarily offered.

There is perhaps no species of writing more entertaining than that of biographical narrative; but its utility must in no small degree depend upon the character of him who becomes the subject of historical relation. This must always form the criterion, when the writer presents to the world a faithful delineation. An individual, who has been renowned for probity and virtue, may become an example to thousands, who may view him as a pattern worthy of imitation; and his history may diffuse virtues through various departments of life, to which our calculations cannot reach. But if these remarks are forcible as they apply to mere mortals, what additional energy must they not acquire when applied to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? His whole life was replete with wonders, and the most exalted virtues; and on these accounts was most worthy of being recorded, and most admirably adapted to receive the embellishments of poetical diction. Through this medium, the same truths may become to many more impressive, than when deli-

vered in prose, and are more easily retained by the memory than when they are communicated in any other way.

It has been said by Aristotle, Bossu, and others, that “ fable is a necessary ingredient in epic poetry.” This no doubt is true, when the heroes brought on the stage are only of a common stature, and can perform nothing more than mere mortal exploits. But in the character of our Lord, we find every thing in most glorious reality which useful fable can be supposed to supply. The miracles, which, in other poems, the invention of the author creates imaginary beings to perform, are here founded in sacred truth, and the interposition of real invisible agents. The ground therefore on which fable delights to take its stand, is already occupied by most sublime facts ; and in proportion as an exchange is made between them, the whole historical relation must suffer disadvantages. Epic poetry can therefore never be in want of fable, while fact and incident can furnish all that is necessary. Indeed, “ to mingle falsehoods,

(as Mr. Wesley has observed,) or dull and legendary fictions, which have neither life nor soul in them, with the blessed gospel of our Saviour, is, in some sense, to make them superior to it. But certainly, expressing the truth in parables, and mingling these with the mysteries of the gospel, cannot be thought to give it an air of fiction; nor dare any one to affirm that it does without blasphemy, since our Saviour has so often done it."

It has been said, that

"The gospel offers nothing to our thoughts,

"But penitence and punishment for faults."

But such as are acquainted with its history know that "it brings life and immortality to light," and that it opens "a new and a living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus;" and such as have felt its spiritual influence, experience that "it is the power of God unto salvation." We know that it holds out the noblest examples, the most exalted motives, and the most glorious rewards; and affords sublimer instances of benevolence,

friendship, magnanimity, and heroic suffering, than any other real history, or even fable, can produce. "It shows us (says Mr. Wesley) a God really descending, disrobed indeed of all his more dazzling and insupportable glories, but yet clothed with what has more of true divinity;— with condescension, and charity, and patience, and meekness, and innocence." The gospel not only points out to us what we are, but also what we should be; and furnishes the means through which the highest degree of moral excellence may be attained. In fine, it is replete with every blessing, and contains the last and greatest gift that ever God bestowed upon mankind.

If we look to the Lord Jesus Christ, we behold in his life and death those transcendent excellencies, which at once excite our astonishment, our gratitude, and our love. If we advert to his words, we must be convinced that "he spake as never man spake;" and if we look to his actions, we behold him "fulfilling all righteousness," and "magnifying the law, and making it honourable." If we recur to his power, we find that "in him

“dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;” and if we survey his love, we discover that “while we were yet sinners, he died for us.” If we question the extent of the gospel, we are informed that “by the grace of God he tasted death for every man;” and if we view his compassions, we are assured that his “tender mercies are over all his works.” If we cast our eyes on his doctrines and his laws, we behold them replete with wisdom, and full of such exalted precepts as command our assent, and compel us to acknowledge that they are divine. His life presents us with a scene of miracles;—his death with an exit of unexampled resignation and dignity;—his resurrection with a triumphant conquest;—and his ascension with an apotheosis which overwhelms the pious and contemplative mind with a flood of genuine glory. Such then is the character of the hero of this poem; and such are some of the important truths which are interwoven in these books!

But glorious as these truths may appear, they are of much further importance to mankind, than merely to embellish narrations, or to adorn the

character of the hero. They are connected with our dearest interests; and are given with a design to disperse that mist of ignorance which sin has raised; to unfold to our discernment a view of our mental and moral condition, and to show the relation in which we stand to God. Nor is this all. The same light which shows our situation by nature, informs us of our danger, and directs us how to escape impending ruin. It points us to the atoning blood of that Saviour who died on Calvary,—displays its efficacy, and fully discovers the path which leads from sin to holiness, from earth to heaven, and from Satan to the Living God.

Nor is this light of a solitary nature, which, like the lunar beam, merely renders objects visible, but communicates neither energy nor warmth. It is accompanied with power which imparts “strength to them that have no might;”—a power which “transforms us by the renewing of our minds,” changing us in our hearts and lives, and leading us through the gradations of holiness to “prepare to meet our God.” It is only through this efficacy, in conjunction with this light, that we can

“ escape the corruptions that are in the world
“ through lust.” But “ through Christ strength-
“ ening us, we can do all things.” Through the
light of his truth, and the influence of his Holy
Spirit, we may be prepared for “ an inheritance
“ that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that
“ fadeth not away.” That these happy effects
may result from this representation of the “ Life
“ of Christ,” is the earnest prayer of

THOMAS COKE.

DUBLIN,
July 15, 1809.

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OF THE

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THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK I.

I Sing the God, who, though enthron'd on high,
In human nature deign'd to live and die:
I sing the God each modest Seraph sings,
The most afflicted, yet the best of kings;

LINE 3. *I sing the God.*] I must expect an attack from the critics, on account of my propositions; who may complain, that they speak too advantageously of my subject, representing it as an immense work, too heavy for an angel; and that nothing more can be found in the whole book, when I talk of—singing the God, &c. even in the second couplet. To them I may answer, that I had injured my divine Hero had I described him other than God as well as man; but yet even there, I make him, as he was, a suffering God: and indeed the greatest part of the proposition is taken up with his exinanition and humiliation, his troubles and his sufferings, which the masters of epic poetry recommend as the most proper matter for that part of a poem. Nay, I have carried him lower than ever any poet yet did his hero, and yet all agreeable to truth,

Him, who from heaven to earth's vile shores came
down, 5

Without his sceptre, diadem, or crown,
To banish Satan to the flames below,
And rescue mortals from impending woe.
Pain mark'd his steps in his incarnate state,
But Godlike patience made him truly great. 10
To close our wounds he pour'd his precious blood,
And with his life procur'd our peace with God.
In his example we distinctly see,
What Jesus was, and what we ought to be.

in that verse, "*And gave his life when he could give no more.*" For the other objection, giving so great an idea of the whole work, as well as the divine Hero, I hope that too may be easily defended, since it is in order to two advantages; the first in the proposition itself, viz. mentioning the author of the Poem with that mediocrity which both truth and decency require: "*How then shall I,*" &c. The second in the natural connexion of the proposition with the invocation, by introducing the Divinity to my assistance, "*O thou whose word,*" &c.

L. 13. *In his example.*] One great end of our Saviour's coming into the world, was undoubtedly to set us a good example; that his followers might learn from him to be holy, to do good, and to suffer evil, through his grace: but to say that that was the chief or only end, or that man could be saved, or God propitiated by his example; that his example could be a propitiation, an

He taught us precepts disbeliev'd before, 15
 And gave his life when he could give no more.
 Hence a new æra in the world began,
 And Heaven descended to reside with man.
 The golden age appear'd again restor'd,
 And saints and angels hail'd their common Lord. 20
 What seers predicted stood reveal'd to sight,
 While earth from heaven receiv'd auspicious light.
 Reviving hope began afresh to bloom,
 And faith's strong optics pierc'd beyond the tomb.
 Thus liv'd and died the Saviour, to regain 25
 Apostate man from everlasting pain!
 Such was the price our great Redeemer gave,
 To ransom wretches whom he came to save!

Will then my Lord propitious aid refuse,
 Invok'd my God, my Hero, and my muse? 30

αντιστατον for the sins of mankind, is just such reason as those who pretend so much to be masters of it frequently put upon the world. I therefore instance in the other ends of our Saviour's coming, teaching a more perfect law, the law of faith, as St. Paul styles it; and principally redeeming mankind, and appeasing his Father by his inestimable merits and painful death; whereby, as the Established Church expressly asserts in the consecration prayer at the communion, "he made a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world."

I sing his life, and humbly hope for aid
 From him by whom created worlds were made ;
 And hence attempt a work immense and rare,—
 A work too vast for angel minds to bear.
 The mightiest masters of the tuneful throng, 35
 Whose souls were smitten with the charms of song,
 Whose names will live till suns shall cease to shine,
 Great Milton, Cowley, Herbert all divine,
 These felt the weighty task ; but feeling fear'd,
 Just sketch'd its outlines, shrunk, and disappear'd. 40
 How then shall I, a nameless thing, presume
 To fill with honor their illustrious room ?
 To shine conspicuous where their laurels fade,
 Or make more progress than these bards have made ?

O thou, whose word this All of nothing made, 45
 And good pronounc'd the beauteous scene display'd,
 O may thy all-enlivening Spirit shine
 Through every part of this new world of mine !

[L. 38. *Great Milton, Cowley, Herbert all divine.*] Mil-
 ton in his *Paradise Lost* : Cowley in his beautiful descrip-
 tion of the angel's annunciation, and incarnation of our
 Saviour, in *David's Dream or Vision* : and Herbert in his
 excellent *Sacrifice*. I might have added more ; but all that
 I have seen are no better than fragments ; a complete
 work of this nature having never yet, as far as I know,
 been attempted in our language.

Both light and being by thy fiat give,
And this through thee with time shall die or live. 50
Thus shall the secret cause appear reveal'd,
Why this succeeded where these poets fail'd.

Two worlds already had confess'd our Lord,
By angels honor'd, and by fiends abhorr'd;
Both Hell and Earth their attestations brought, 55
And rage and gladness prov'd the cures he wrought.
His great designs this varied witness gave,
Those to subdue, but these he came to save.
His ransom'd subjects loud hosannahs sing,
While fiends retire and curse their ancient King. 60
Already he in deserts waste and wild,
In Godlike innocence severely mild,
Had met the tyrant of the realms below,
And hand to hand subdu'd the mighty foe,
Who, cursing, fled, as when transfix'd he fell 65
With double vengeance to the flames of hell.
Thus God at last in his own cause appears,
To ransom man, and wipe his servants' tears.

Yet those who people the bright realms of day,
Must also homage to their Master pay, 70
To vouch for glories not allow'd to shine,
And prove to man his embassy divine.

On Tabor's mount t' evince his mission true,
 Both heaven and earth sustain'd this interview.
 This mount of God, as Sinai long before, 75
 Celestial glories now descending, bore.
 With glowing beauties this divine abode
 Recal'd the ancient Paradise of God.

L. 75. This mount of God.] The mount of the transfiguration is called the holy mount by St. Peter in his epistles. Nor is there any great doubt but that this was Mount Tabor, the Itabyrium of Josephus, since most of the moderns and ancients are of that opinion. The primitive christians undoubtedly believed it, which they might easily do by tradition, from the disciples: and accordingly the Empress Helena built three Oratories, as is supposed, in the very place of the transfiguration.

L. 77. With glowing beauties this divine abode.] The greater part of Palestine is, even now, described, by those who have seen it, as so beautiful, that it is impossible for poetry to mend it; particularly this Mount Tabor, which all travellers represent as one of the most delicious places in the world. Among many, see Surius's *Pieux Pelerine*, p. 316. "Le sommet de ce sacre mont
 " est fort agrèable, &c. The top of this holy mount is ex-
 " tremely agreeable and pleasant." 'Tis situated in the
 " great plain of Esdraclon, about three leagues from
 " Nazareth, in form like a sugar-loaf, with a curious
 " pleasant plain on the top; from whence to the foot of it,
 " it is all covered with flowers, trees, and shrubs (qui sont
 " toujours verdoyants), which are always green or flourish-
 " ing, as balsam-trees, olives, laurels," &c. And lower,
 " This mount seems to have one of the most beautiful
 " prospects in the world: to the east you may see the

While ships of burden float with decent pride
In deeper waters on the swelling tide ; 90
These wave their streamers and expand their sails,
And with spread canvas intercept the gales.
Beyond these bounds appears, due east, well known,
Arabia's bosom, chiefly fam'd for stone.

language, which gives the name of sea to all gatherings together of waters, as the sea of Jazer east of Jordan, and even the Brazen sea belonging to the Temple. It has four proper names in the scriptures: one in the Old Testament, the sea of Cinneroth, either from a town so called on its borders, or from its form, something like a harp, in the Hebrew Cinner: In the New Testament it is styled the lake or sea of Gennezareth, Galilee, and Tiberias; Gennezareth, either from Gan Hortus, and Nazar, a flower; or compounded of two languages, a thing common enough; from γη Terra, and Nazareth, a famous neighbouring town, or perhaps some small district thereabout: lastly, the sea of Galilee, from the country so called washing most of its eastern side, and especially the town of Tiberias, standing between Jotopata and Tarichæa, the latter of which Josephus says had much shipping. At the north-west corner of the sea or lake stands Bethsaida; on the east side Gadara, which made such a desperate defence against the Romans; and near that Gerasa or Girgase, which names that whole side of the country, being all the remains of the old nation of the Girgashites, destroyed by Joshua. Josephus makes this lake a hundred furlongs in length, and six in breadth, describing at large thereon the famous sea-fight of the people of that country with the Romans. Our Biddulph says, it is twenty-four miles long, and fifteen broad.

South Kishon rolls, whose banks new waters fill, 95
When pass'd by Western Hermon's gentle hill.
It rolls august, but yields a weaker tide,
Than when the stars engag'd on Israel's side ;
When o'er its crimson'd waves, a ghastly throng,
Bodies, and shields, and helms, promiscuous roll'd
along. 100

Its winding course thence west and northward goes,
And near the walls of little Naim flows.

Hence Carmel's yielding groves entice its waves,
To add new beauties to the soil it laves.

L. 96. When pass'd by Western Hermon's gentle hill.]

Kishon, here described, is reckoned by geographers the noblest river in Palestine next to the Jordan. It has two heads and two falls, unless my authors are mistaken: its largest head rises south of Tabor, near Sebaste or Samaria; and passing this Western Hermon, a small mountain so called on the west of Jordan, not far from Gilboa, just at the foot of Tabor, it joins the other stream which comes from the north of that mountain, called by some little Kishon. Its two falls are, one into the lake of Tiberias, south of Tarichæa; the other into the Mediterranean, called in the scriptures the Western Sea, and the Great Sea, to distinguish it from their inland seas, and the great Mare Eoim, behind Arabia.

L. 103. Hence Carmel's yielding groves entice its waves.]

It is indeed described like a paradise by Fuller and others: for thus he writes in his *Pisgah*, Lib. 2. p. 161. "As
" for Carmel in general, it was so delicious a place, that

Here, when Elijah Baal's minions slew, 105
Who brought false Gods to supersede the true,
This stream receiv'd the impious culprits' blood,
And on its margin Israel turn'd to God.
From hence it rolls to the great western flood,
A little north, where wealthy Tyrus stood ; 110
Whose stately walls nor storms nor ocean fear,
Whose hardy sons defied the wastes of war.

“ more rural pleasure was hardly to be fancied than here
“ to be found. It consisted of high hills, a fruitful vale,
“ the pleasant river of Kishon, and a goodly forest. From
“ which Carmel, as the platform of pleasure, many other
“ delightful places are so named.”

L. 110. A little north, where wealthy Tyrus stood.]
Palætyrus, or old Tyre, was built on the sea-shore. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, after a thirteen years siege, though he got nothing by it but the bare nest, the inhabitants flying by sea to their colony at Carthage. After which, new Tyre rose like a phœnix out of its ashes ; whence some have thought both name and fable take their original. It was built within the very arms of the sea, the Mediterranean coming quite round it ; by the advantage of which situation it sustained a siege of some time, even from Alexander himself, who at last took it with almost infinite pains and labour, being forced to make a causeway into the sea to get at it. But he was well paid for his labour by the incredible riches which he found therein. Now it is altered indeed ; nothing of all its proud buildings being left, besides about a hundred miserable huts of Turks and Moors, among vast heaps of ruins.

Her sister Sidon asks a bolder flight,
A tedious distance to the wearied sight—
A greater journey than the eye has made, 115
And seems half buried in projecting shade.
For close behind it with aspiring height,
The clouds of Libanus obstruct the sight.
If southern views our wand'ring eyes detain,
Jezreel appears, and rich Megiddo's plain; 120
In that dire spot, unhappy Naboth fell;
In this, Josiah bade the world farewell.
But angry justice overtook the base,
And rooted out vile Ahab's wicked race.

To this fair mount our blessed Lord repair'd, 125
By those attended who his favors shar'd.
Two destin'd martyrs, and the third his friend,
By him selected, with their Lord ascend.
First James and John, whose superadded name
Was drawn from thunder to express their flame. 130

L. 127. Two destin'd martyrs, and the third his friend.]
St. Peter, crucified at Rome with his head downward; and
St. James, beheaded by Herod.

L. 130. Was drawn from thunder to express their flame.]
So interpreted by the Evangelist himself, "Boanerges, that
" is, sons of thunder."

Cephas came next, whose more unrivall'd zeal
Our Lord rebuk'd ere it was known to fail.
These, with his more peculiar favor bless'd,
He takes apart, and leaves behind the rest.

Scarce had the cheerful harbinger of day 135
Warn'd with his voice the shades of night away,
Before our watchful Saviour, (who denies
The sun, his shade, before himself should rise,)
Had conquer'd Tabor's lofty summit, where
His soul ascends in ardent hymns and prayer. 140
No earthly thought, no sublunary things,
Could clog his spirit or retard its springs,
Or check its progress to the Father's throne,
The mystic mansion of the great Three-One.
To Tabor's mount he beckon'd from the sky 145
Two glorious saints who reign'd enthron'd on high—
Moses, the leader of God's chosen band,
Who nature's laws inverted with his wand—
With him Elijah, who sublimely rode
A car of lightning to the throne of God; 150
Whose soul of flame as pure and warm was made
As those which him to his reward convey'd.

Thus law and prophets their perfection find
In Him who suffer'd to redeem mankind.
Thus Christ, and Moses, and Elias came, 155
Their persons diff'rent, but their views the same.
These, wrapp'd in glory, on mount Tabor walk'd,
And things unutterable look'd and talk'd.
Yet thus compar'd, Elijah's zeal decay'd,
And Moses saw his rivall'd meekness fade. 160

Here they convers'd on God's mysterious love,
But half reveal'd to those enthron'd above.
They knew their Lord, their monarch of the sky,
Must yield to death, although he could not die;
The Light of Light, hymn'd by the heav'nly quire,
The co-essential Son of his almighty Sire. 166
This sacred doctrine fully to explain
The host of heaven had labor'd long in vain.
But though they could not his designs explore,
Their duty bade them credit and adore. 170

L. 153. Thus law and prophets their perfection find.]
It is an observation of some of the fathers, that by the appearance of Moses and Elias to our Saviour, was figur'd the harmony between the law, the prophets, and the gospel which he then came to deliver. And indeed there seems to be more of solidity in this than in most of those allegorical fancies.

While thus conversing, these the truth discern'd,
And from the Saviour the dread secret learn'd.
Dull slumbers seiz'd the three Apostles' eyes,
And due attention from each bosom flies.
Fatigu'd and careless they supinely lay, 175
Nor knew the worth of this important day.
The Saviour saw, and with a piercing beam
Rous'd the dull sloths from their inglorious dream.
They starting gaz'd, but found the scene too bright,
And shrunk disorder'd from the flood of light : 180
Confus'd, o'erwhelm'd, with these refulgent beams,
It seem'd a vision of romantic dreams.
Thus when the last, the dreadful moment comes,
That groaning nature shall unfold her tombs,
When God's pavilion in the clouds is spread, 185
And lambent lightnings flame around his head,
Creation trembling at the sight shall fly,
And guilty mortals wish again to die.

The Saviour saw their visual orbs oppress'd,
And half the glory of the scene repress'd. 190
What yet remain'd his condescension veil'd,
And mitigated what was not conceal'd.
Then, tho' they gaz'd, the wondrous things they saw
Their utmost powers were far too weak to draw.

Unrivall'd beauties deck'd the Saviour's face, 195
His dazzling form the circling glories grace.
His seamless coat, than falling snows more white,
Enclos'd a pillar of transparent light :
This stands alone, though human arts combine,
And clearly proves the workmanship divine. 200
The two great prophets who beside him stood,
Array'd in light, their modest glories show'd.
Thus stars appear, when twinkling they display
Their feeble lustre to the orb of day.
Yet Moses, who from trembling Sinai came, 205
Appear'd encircl'd in a robe of flame ;
While great Elijah, half conceal'd from sight,
Shone with strange lustre through a cloud of light :
Should we these scenes to things on earth compare,
We needs must blot what should be render'd fair :
Just as the painter, who designs to show 211
The sun above, portrays a cloud below.

L. 197. His seamless coat, than falling snows more white.]
In St. Matth. xvii. 2. we read, "His face did shine as the sun,
and his raiment was white as the light." There is little
doubt but that the same splendour, or glory, with which his
face shone, was also communicated to all his blessed body :
hence he shone through his clothes, they receiving light from
him now, as virtue at other times; whence they must needs
appear white, as the clouds do when the sun pierces them
with his rays.

The sun advancing trembled as he shone,
Eclips'd with splendors stronger than his own;
Yet seeing Him whom distant worlds obey, 215
Dispell'd the clouds, and drove the car of day.
Thus cherubs look in their harmonious course
Near light and beauty's unexhausted source :
Their robes grow brilliant, when, commanded, they
Some mighty message to the world convey. 220

Transports of joy fill'd each disciple's breast,
Too big for utterance, or to be repress'd.
They saw their reason in these truths expire,
Just as the sun extinguishes the fire.
Thus when some prophet has a vision seen, 225
Or feels an impulse from his God within,
In all his gestures, in his eyes, we find
Decisive tokens of his lab'ring mind ;
The springs of nature full of life appear :
Thus the disciples look'd and acted here. 230
What they perceiv'd, was pleasure mix'd with pain,
And what they fear'd, was losing it again.
Their pond'ring thoughts in mute suspension hung,
And solemn silence sat on every tongue,
Till Cephas, urg'd to ease his anxious breast, 235
Spoke for himself the language of the rest:

" Much honour'd Master, if thy servants are
 " Peculiar objects of thy heav'nly care,
 " Grant us permission on this mount to stay ;
 " Or if we move, O take our souls away. 240
 " If thus permitted to continue here,
 " We can with ease three tabernacles rear,
 " For Thee, for Moses, for Elias one ;
 " Speak but the word the labor shall be done ;
 " Nor has creation's Lord disdain'd to dwell 245
 " In the poor tents of favour'd Israel."

Scarcely had Cephas these desires declar'd,
 Before new scenes of miracles appear'd.
 Around their heads celestial clouds arise,
 Which rather brighten than conceal the skies ; 250
 Compar'd with day they seem'd divinely fair,
 And scatter'd odours through the balmy air :
 Form'd of materials most serenely bright,
 They shone a tissue of unsullied light.
 Such are those fleeces which unheeded stray, 255
 Where God dispenses everlasting day :
 Such was that cloud which made the world's first
 morn,
 Ere the young sun or infant stars were born:

*L. 257. Such was that cloud which made the world's first
 morn.] It is generally thought, that this light which was*

Such was that pillar which from Egypt mov'd
To pilot myriads by their God belov'd. 260
From earth to heav'n the lofty column spread,
A moving mountain form'd of flame and shade.

The three Apostles, as the clouds prevail,
Felt all their spirits and their muscles fail;
Their loins relax, their knees no strength impart,
And fear and trembling seize on every heart. 266
Thus heav'nly virtue, though through shadows seen,
Must with convulsions strike the sons of men!
Low on the earth, dissolv'd in reverent fear, 269
They heard a voice which none but they must hear;
The voice of God; no more in frowns express'd,
With lightnings written, or in thunders dress'd,
Such as at Sinai issued forth the law,
And with dread earthquakes rock'd the plains below,
But all melodious, tranquil, and serene, 275
Which charm'd like music this delightful scene.
In words like these the will of God was given,
In attestation of the King of heaven :

created the first day, and distinguished day and night by its circumvolution, till the fourth day, when the sun was made, was no other than a body of light of whose creation we read in Gen. i. 3. and which was afterwards distributed into sun, stars, and perhaps other lucid bodies.

“ I thus declare thee my Beloved Son, 279
“ Whom all my servants shall both hear and own.”

They heard, but durst not the great Speaker meet,
But humbly prostrate kiss their Master's feet ;
Who, with those accents which the dead can raise,
Sooth'd his weak friends, who wake to bursts of praise ;
Then silent gaz'd, but could no more discern 285
The heavenly pair, whose absence now they mourn.

Thus holy souls from sin's gross dregs refin'd,
Whose frames assimilate to perfect mind,
Whose mystic converse with the saints in light
Remains unbroken, and imparts delight— 290
When these perceive, through sleep's dim curtains,
shine

Angelic essences and forms divine,
They wake, and sigh to find them disappear,
Or rapt in vision clasp the empty air : 294
So these had mourn'd, but that their gracious Lord
Dispell'd their sorrows with his peaceful word.
He, rais'd above that flame which men desire,
Of glory kindled at ambition's fire,
What they had seen commands them to conceal,
For reasons then not prudent to reveal, 300

Till he the Saviour of the world should die,
Forsake the tomb, and re-ascend the sky :
Then should these links in proper order shine,
And prove the chain of evidence divine.

They all amaz'd revolv'd his deep intent, 305
Nor fathom'd what these strange expressions meant,-
That Christ must die, they heard with strange
surprise—

And burst the barriers of the tomb and rise :
Hence tardy faith these painful truths receiv'd,
And half suspected what it half believ'd. 310
On quitting Tabor he the same express'd,
And tides of grief infus'd in every breast ;
Describ'd his wounds, his pains, those scenes of woe,
Which he, though sinless, soon must undergo :
How he, to enter death's uneasy gate, 315
Must bear the guilty world's unequal weight,
Yet burst asunder death's inglorious chain,
And the third morning rise to life again.

Peculiar anguish enter'd every heart
At truths so dreadful which his lips impart. 320
All would as gladly, if they durst, reprove,
As Cephas did through his officious love ;

“ This shall not be,” presumptuously he cried,
And in effect the truth of God denied.

Oh ! born to err, our kindness soars too high, 325

Or Christ must suffer, or the world must die.

He knew what heavy ransom must be paid,

Ere time was born, or earth’s foundation laid :

He knew the time, and pointed to that hour

When He for man his sacred blood must pour. 330

The place appear’d, Jerusalem was nigh,

Whose lofty turrets glitter’d in the sky :

A city charg’d with seas of blood before,

Yet this of Christ must now involve it more ;

And treasure vengeance for that awful day, 335

When Roman eagles, watching for their prey,

Should seize her sons to stern destruction giv’n,

And on their heads discharge the wrath of heaven.

Christ from this place to Galilee repairs,

Eas’d by devotion while oppress’d with cares ; 340

And through its wilds a silent journey takes,

Nor aims at greatness by the cures he makes.

Yet vain his efforts to proceed conceal’d,

Suns always shine by their own light reveal’d.

See from afar what crowding myriads come, 345

And in their train, the blind, the halt, the dumb ;

Impell'd by hope, abandon'd cripples meet,
And find compassion at the Saviour's feet.
From old Bethabara the sick they bring, 349
And swarms attend from Jordan's double spring.
Lepers, demoniacs, feel the genial shower,
And trembling demons shrink beneath his power.
The lame their feet without their crutches find,
And those go seeing who approach'd him blind,

But Oh, what angel's eloquence could prove 355
A just describer of his deeds of love !
His light imparted to relieve the blind,
Shone on their spirits to illume their mind.
Returning vigour to the lame was given, 359
That these restor'd might urge their way to heaven.
And while the leper felt his softening skin,
Grace overcame the leprosy within.
How oft has Christ, with deeds like these oppress'd,
Retir'd from labor to solicit rest ! 364
Thus while his works evinc'd his heavenly birth,
Fatigue proclaim'd him like the sons of earth.
To gain that rest which gath'ring crowds denied,
He sometimes slept upon the swelling tide ;
And found repose upon the hoary main,
Which earth refus'd, or made him seek in vain. 370

'Twas in a boat of fair Bethsaida's town,
Which James, and John, their Sire, and Peter, own,
That Christ retir'd to taste the balm of sleep,
Or wake alternately to pray and weep,
When he exerted his Almighty sway, 375
Which both the ocean and the storms obey.
'Twas at a time when length'ning shadows stray
To warn mankind of the decline of day,
That he forsook the Galilean shore,
The men and coasts of Gadara t'explore ; 380
And when on board, the humble cabin takes,
And sleeps, though all his guard of angels wakes.
The anchor weigh'd, the seamen spread their sails,
And glide in peace before the friendly gales,
While breeze, and waves, one common promise
brought 385
To land them safely on the coast they sought.
But soon prognostics, terrible to sight,
Deform'd the prospects of the flatt'ring night.
The seamen saw a gath'ring vapour rise,
Which snatch'd the land from their half wearied
eyes, 390
Still dark'ning more and more the disappearing
skies.

Old Zebedee, by long experience taught,
To times and seasons turn'd his labouring thought:
When first intent he view'd the black'ning air,
He bade his mates for coming storms prepare; 395
Then seiz'd the helm, as one who knew it best,
And to their quarters order'd all the rest.
Nor was their care more needful than their haste;
A gloomy darkness all the skies o'ercast;
In sullen gusts the winds began to roar, 400
And drive large billows to the distant shore.
Whether the foe might here attempt to gain
What on the land he struggled for in vain;
Or hop'd by sudden onset to prevail,
Where with fair force he durst no more assail; 405
Or whether nature only lent the storm,
That men might see what Jesus could perform;
By him permitted, who can storms controul
Which ravage nature, and unhinge the soul;
Remains uncertain to the human race, 410
And stands a secret which we cannot trace.
But whether this from nature claim'd its birth,
Or him who rules the disobedient earth,
Still more and more its threat'ning rage prevails,
And from the mast divides the splitting sails. 415

The dead sea roars, and sulph'rous vapours come
In rolling flames from its infernal womb :
Regions remote strange desolations bear,
And bolting thunders bellow through the air.
Old Jordan hears, its waters backward run 420
(As thrice before) the fatal shock to shun :
Against the stream rolls in th' unnatural tide,
And should'ring seas upon each other ride:
Wind against wind, floods dashing floods, arise,
Whirlwinds and whirlpools blend both earth and
skies. 425

Descending sleets from every quarter come,
And fear and ice the seamen's hands benumb.
Full o'er their heads upon a dismal cloud
Fate's angry messengers for passage crowd. 429
From its broad front wide sheets of flame are driven,
While wrathful lightnings show the vaults of heav'n.
These with new horrors strike their eyes with light ;
But rather burn than interrupt the night.
By these they saw the boiling deep display 434
Those hidden caves where wild sea-monsters play ;

*L. 421. As thrice before.] Once to Joshua, Josh. iii. 16,
once to Elijah, 2 Kings, ii. 8. then to Elisha, ibid. 14.*

The gulf which yawn'd produc'd a horrid shore
Of rocks and shelves unseen by man before.
Above, they heard black worlds of water rave,
While death in triumph rode each threat'ningwave.
Thither on surges, fearfully, they rise, 440
And hang in pyramids amidst the skies ;
Thence deep descending, in the awful vale,
Shun for some moments the destructive gale.
Thus in wild tumult rais'd, depress'd, and toss'd,
They mourn their fate, and give themselves for lost.
The helm no more the nervous hand obeys, 446
But wildly suffers from conflicting seas.
The oozing seams portend some dreadful blow,
Which soon must sink them in the shades below :
Some treach'rous plank they soon expect will start,
Kill their last hopes, and bid their souls depart.
Half fill'd with streams, which now increasing flow,
A thought occur'd that Jesus slept below :
And in that moment when on him they think,
A cry was utter'd—" Save us, Lord; we sink." 455
All pray'd, but Judas most, who, dreading fate,
Invok'd that aid which now appear'd too late.
The Saviour, hearing their expiring cries,
Came to their aid with pity in his eyes, 459

Chid the mad waves, rebuk'd the blust'ring wind,
And chain'd their anger with his mighty mind.
Obedient nature heard his voice, and stood,
And gentle breezes kiss'd the swelling flood ;
The mountains sunk, the vales became a plain,
And zephyrs whisper'd on the tranquil main : 465
The night once more became a peaceful shade,
Still'd by that Word by which the world was made.
Thus ere his Fiat gave creation birth,
Or planted order on the spacious earth,
Tumult through chaos caus'd black waves to roar,
Whose turbid waters knew no rest nor shore. 471
But when the Godhead its wild bosom press'd,
The uniform'd elements inclin'd to rest ;
Their mingled masses thenceforth pregnant prove,
And Light was born to Chaos and to Love. 475
Thus at his voice the boist'rous storms subside,
And stars are seen reflected from the tide ;
The crazy vessel reach'd the destin'd shore,
And those who trembled, now their Lord adore ;
While guilty demons shun his piercing sight, 480
And flee for succour to their native night.

Yet more illustrious miracles attend
The Saviour, hast'ning to his journey's end.

Strong, and refresh'd, to Olives' mount they go,
And thence survey the city stretch'd below. 485
Descending hence, among the trees they spy
Thy happy walls, delightful Bethany !
A village this where Lazarus was lord,
Who often at his hospitable board
Regal'd the Saviour and his faithful friends, 490
Without adverting to his private ends.
Nor could these friends, so near, neglect that door
Where mutual kindness fill'd each breast before.
With him two sisters now repos'd in love, 494
And turn'd their faith and hope to things above.
Martha had long her brother's fortune shar'd,
And made his int'rest her sincere regard,
Had liv'd sequester'd with unspotted fame,
And cherish'd virtues which adorn'd her name.
But hapless Mary had at courts been bred, 500
And trodden paths where pleasure's snares are laid,

L. 490. Regal'd the Saviour and his faithful friends.] They might be all faithful yet, though Judas was afterwards corrupted : or if not, the old *Denominatio à majori* will be a sufficient plea.

L. 500. But hapless Mary had at courts been bred.] I know it is controverted, whether this Mary were the repenting Magdalene ; but it is enough for me, that some great divines have been of that opinion.

There found her chastity a weak defence
Against those arts which murder innocence.
Her soul, subdued by vanity and pride,
Soon lost that virtue which had been her guide ;
Hence lust, ambition, each unholy guest, 506
And seven black demons seiz'd her guilty breast.
These hell-born fiends the Saviour chas'd away,
As mists are scatter'd by the rising day ;
Recall'd her soul, by mercy's powerful charms, 510
From a deceiver's to a Saviour's arms.
Hence an illustrious penitent she prov'd ;
Her crimes were great, and much she wept and lov'd.
Thence from the court to Bethany she came, 514
To mourn and pray, and spread her Saviour's fame:
Through grace divine she found her soul reliev'd,
And by her brother was with joy receiv'd.

Martha and Mary join'd in one request,
And Christ, and his, to see their brother, press'd,
Who now beneath a mortal fever's rage, 520
Which no attempts could baffle or assuage,
Just gasp'd for life : for, standing by his bed,
The stern physician shook his awful head ;
Thence with slow steps in silence to the door
Walks, and declares his skill can do no more. 525

The pious sisters, overcome with grief,
Look round on all, soliciting relief :
But look in vain for what no art can give,
To dry their tears, and make their brother live.
In this distress they call'd that Friend to mind 530
Whose powerful voice gave eye-sight to the blind;
And sent a message, though it seem'd too late,
To snatch their brother from impending fate,
To hasten Christ whose power alone could save
Him whom he lov'd from sickness or the grave.

Christ in reply forbade them to despair, 536
And order'd both to dissipate their fear,—
Told them, that he whom raging sickness prov'd,
Should spread the glory of the God they lov'd.
He, notwithstanding, his approach delay'd, 540
And, though requested, at a distance stay'd,
Till from his friend the parting soul had fled,
And his remains were lodg'd among the dead.
The funeral rites with due observance made,
And all just honors to his ashes paid, 545
His weeping friends to his sad house return,
Condole the sisters, and their losses mourn.
But while they pour'd their lamentations here,
The tidings reach'd them, that our Lord was near.

Martha on this, her Godlike guest to meet, 550
Left her companions, and embrac'd his feet;
And while recounting their disaster—cried,
“Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died;
“And even now, such is my faith's degree,
“Ask what thou wilt, and God will give it thee.”
The Saviour, struck with sympathetic pain, 556
Replied—“Thy brother shall revive again.”

Attentive Martha listen'd to her Lord,
Then ran to Mary with his gracious word:
But still her faith directed her to view 560
That final hour when all must find it true.
The mourning fair some pious Jews attend,
And praise the deeds of their departed friend;
Recount his virtues, his good actions tell,
And inly sigh to live and die as well. 565
When these perceiv'd that Mary went in haste,
They also rose, not knowing what had pass'd,
And fully bent to soothe the weeping pair,
Walk'd to the grave to pour their sorrows there.
Mary, whom Martha to the Saviour bore, 570
Fell at his feet as Martha fell before,
And prostrate there in plaintive accents cried,
“Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died.”

The mournful group the general grief express'd,
And Jesus groaning wept among the rest: 575
The woes of man his tender passions mov'd,
He wept like man the loss of what he lov'd.
Again he wept, and ask'd where Lazarus lay,
Devoid of life, a sordid lump of clay?
Too well they knew the margin of the cave, 580
And show'd the marble that conceal'd his grave.
With sighs suppress'd, he heav'd an inward groan,
And bade the people roll away the stone.
Martha, not yet perceiving his intent,
Anxious to please, yet willing to prevent, 585
Spoke, paus'd, lamented, hesitated, sigh'd,
" 'Tis now so long, dear Master, since he died,
" That putrid steams must needs infect the air,
" Which neither Thou nor these his friends can
bear."

L. 575. And Jesus groaning wept among the rest.] He groaned, John, xi. 33, wept, 35. And here I need not tell any judicious reader, that I feel myself fall infinitely short of the history, which I think has the most tenderness in it of any in the whole bible, excepting perhaps that of our Saviour's commending his mother to his friend from the cross, in the ninth book. Nor can scarcely any thing be a greater argument of our Saviour's kindness and goodness to mankind, than his being thus concerned at his friends' misfortunes, even when he knew that he should soon remove them.

Jesus reply'd, " Believe, and wonders see, 590
" And humbly these events consign to me."

The stone remov'd, to Heav'n he lifts his eyes,
And prays awhile to Him who form'd the skies ;
Then turning boldly to the lifeless clay,
Before spectators in the face of day, 595
Lifted that voice which ancient silence broke,
That heaven and earth might witness what he
spoke ;

Then, with that power which gave creation birth,
Pronounc'd augustly, " LAZARUS, COME FORTH."

The piercing accents enter'd death's dark bed,
And from its slumbers woke the trembling dead :
Bound hands and feet, reviving Lazarus mov'd,
And ask'd assistance from the friends he lov'd :
These, while their looks astonishment betray,
Unloos'd his fetters, and he walk'd away. 605
The gath'ring crowds with stupid wonder gaz'd,
Look'd on each other, then on Christ, amaz'd.
A bursting joy from all exclaim'd, " He lives ;
" Dread Son of God," they shout again, " he lives."
Upon his neck the ravish'd sisters fell, 610
And claim'd almost another miracle

Them from their furious transports to revive,
Half dead with joy that Lazarus was alive.

Christ from the crowd immediately withdraws,
At once t'escape his foes, and shun applause : 615
For in proportion to the good he wrought,
The Jewish elders his destruction sought.
Hence to the wilderness a tour he made,
And found a shelter in the desert shade ;
In pious deeds his happy moments spent, 620
And scatter'd miracles where'er he went ;
He liv'd secluded till that day was nigh
When to redeem us he was doom'd to die ;
But then return'd to suffer, and fulfil
The high commands of his great Father's will. 625

But ere the Saviour from these coasts retir'd,
Simon a friendly interview desir'd.
Simon had long through leprosy been blind,
A shocking spectacle to all mankind—
Had liv'd secluded in a lonely cell, 630
Where shut from man infectious lepers dwell.
His foul disease had been so much abhorr'd,
That all forsook him but our gracious Lord ;

L. 628. Simon had long through leprosy been blind.] He is called Simon the leper, Mark, xiv. 3.

Who, through compassions most divinely great,
Had quite restor'd him to a healthy state. 635
Simon had now in splendid ease retir'd,
With every blessing that his soul desir'd;
And near to Bethany, his father's seat,
Had cherish'd virtue on his own estate.
But while his riches in abundance flow'd, 640
His heart with grateful recollection glow'd;
Nor once forgot amidst increasing wealth
The great Physician who restor'd his health.
To Christ one eve he sent, and strongly press'd
Him, with his twelve, to be that night his guest;—
Told him a little banquet he'd prepare, 646
And Laz'rus and his sisters would be there.
To this request the Saviour, in reply,
Gave his consent, his wish to gratify;
For in his life we no mean stiffness see, 650
His heart was open, and his converse free;
Life's lawful pleasures he vouchsaf'd to taste,
And all the virtues of both worlds embrac'd.

The guests, arriv'd, a summer parlour found,
Where Tyrian carpets overspread the ground. 655
Hangings as rich adorn'd the stately room,
The dear-bought work of Sidon's noble loom.

On these some figures drew the strangers' eyes,
Which in their breasts excited much surprize.

For full before them, as intent they gaz'd, 660

The fate of Sodom they distinctly trac'd ;

And in the features which these colours bore,

It frown'd almost as dreadful as before.

The workman's efforts so successful prove,

That all the figures seem'd to weep and move. 665

Here in a plain the flaming cities glow,

And there spectators into statues grow.

See there where Lot's apostate partner stands,

And backward throws her longing eyes and hands ;

These eyes and hands, from whence warm life had

fled,

670

The skilful artist marks as pale and dead.

Those cheeks which first a ruddy freshness show,

Fade while you look, and into paleness grow.

Part of her hair death seems in chains to bind,

And part appears to waver with the wind. 675

One foot seem'd rais'd, resolv'd its load to bear,

And one seem'd fix'd by cogent fetters there.

Just half transform'd, you view a doubtful strife

'Twixt death's encroachments and expiring life ;

Till by degrees she seems of breath bereft ; 680

And while you gaze, no more of life is left.

Yet in her face, fear, anger, pity, strive,
As skilful artists make their marbles live.

Not far before, the good old man appears,
By Angels hasten'd and his ruling fears— 685
The small remains of Sodom with him bears,
And moistens with his tears his silver hairs.
See them scarce lodg'd in little Zoar's walls,
Before from clouds the ruddy vengeance falls.
Big drops of flaming gold, profusely spent, 690
The falling fire and brimstone represent.
See all aghast the criminals look pale,
While flaming tides descend through Siddim's vale :
With fearful shrieks they seem to pierce the sky,
And half persuade you that you hear them cry, 695
Or ask for mercy they despis'd of late,
And mourn for their inevitable fate.

Above, some Hebrew characters bestow
This just reflection on the piece below :

“ Learn, mortals, hence, by this example given, 700
“ To dread the wrath of sin-avenging Heaven.
“ Here fiery lust was purg'd with hotter fire,—
“ In flames like these Gomorrah's sons expire.”

While here they read old Sodom's fearful doom,
Martha and Mary to the banquet come. 705
Their twice-born brother every eye awakes,
And all attention from the painting takes.
The modest youth a low obedience made,
And to his Lord a grateful homage paid ;
Felt at his sight devotion warm his breast, 710
And all his soul in looks and words express'd.
Here on their seats each cheerful guest was plac'd,
Excepting Martha, who directs the feast ;
And Magdalene, who fell with sighs profound,
And tears effus'd, in homage on the ground. 715
She with low rev'rence clasp'd the Saviour's feet,
Nor left that station but with much regret ;
With deep contrition smote her heaving breast,
As though unworthy of the ground she press'd.
With her some costly essences she brings, 720
Which would have rais'd her in the eyes of kings,
When all her charms were dress'd and spread to
please
Abandon'd man, who seeks licentious ease.
Full on his feet she pour'd the rich perfume,
And all Arabia scatters round the room ; 725

While from her eyes distils a grateful shower,
And flowing tears a richer fragrance pour.
Then with her ringlets, which, in curls display'd,
Had once for man delusive fetters made,
She wipes the sacred feet her hands embrac'd, 730
And spreads that essence some conceiv'd a waste.
Iscariot said,—“ This cost had been employ'd
“ To better use, if by the poor enjoy'd.”
Not that he felt the welfare of the poor,
His sordid aims were to increase his store; 735
For while pretending to afford relief,
His views were selfish—Judas was a thief.

Our Lord, who knew the workings of his mind,
Took up his speech just as it seem'd design'd ;
And, to enlarge their too contracted sight, 740
Spoke of his exit to impart new light.
“ This precious ointment, which, with too much
haste,
“ Has been (he said) by some reputed waste,
“ Against my coming funeral is design'd,
“ A mournful truth which all will quickly find. 745
“ Then as my Gospel spreads, it shall be show'd,
“ How Mary paid the gratitude she ow'd.”

The sad Apostles hear these painful words,
And every breast the prophecy records;
Yet none the anguish of his soul express'd, 750
Or ask'd the Saviour to unfold the rest.

That night at pleasant Bethany they stay,
But take their leave on the succeeding day ;
Thence to fair Bethphage Christ his footsteps bends,
Where gath'ring crowds proclaim themselves his
friends. 755
See there the height to which his soul aspir'd !
See there the pomp which Salem's king desir'd !
On him no horse, no liveried servants wait,
To grace his triumph in a car of state.
A servile Ass sustains th' incarnate Lord, 760
By Angels worshipp'd, and by saints ador'd.
Hence Rome's proud Pontiff may this truth discern,
That he from Christ ambition did not learn.

See where the multitudes their homage pay,
And, as predicted, decorate his way. 765
Branches and clothes through all his paths are
thrown,
And the palm's garments mingle with their own.

L. 767. *And the palm's garments mingle with their own.*] A custom among the Jews, to spread their garments under great

Thus while they move, from all their voices rise
Those loud hosannas which ascend the skies.
“Hail, Son of David,” all their tongues declare, 770
And then hosannas rend again the air.
But soon these lips will urge a different cry,
And those who shout will clamour—“Crucify.”
Christ plainly knew, because he all things knows,
His fickle friends and his inveterate foes; 775
And through the whole perceiv’d without dismay
The precious ransom which his life must pay.

From the hoarse tumults of the town and day
Jesus retir’d as night resum’d her sway;
And while he thus the destin’d city leaves, 780
The town of Bethany its Lord receives.
Here was his couch by innocence prepar’d,
And watchful Angels were that night his guard.

A hill there is which fronts with decent pride
Illustrious Solyma’s bright eastern side, 785
With groves of olive crown’d, and thence does claim
From time unknown its immemorial name;

great persons, as a high token of honour; and as it seems,
a ceremony of inauguration, and due only to regal dignity;
for thus did the captains to Jehu, when they agreed with
God’s way of disposal, and acknowledged him king. 2 Kings,
ix. 13.

Whose three degrees each other higher bear,
Resembling regions in the ambient air.
From its proud top, if there spectators go, 790
They see the city and the clouds below.
A lovely vale creeps gently winding down,
And fills the space between the hill and town.
On its green breast deceitful Kidron flows,
A torrent now, and now a rill it shows. 795
And when the earth, scorch'd by the solar beams,
Most wants its moisture, most it hides its streams :
True map of worldly joys ! so short their stay,
So imperceptibly they glide away !
By Chemosh and by Moloch first it runs, 800
And the wise king's disgraceful follies shuns :

L. 788. Whose three degrees each other higher bear.] Mount Olivet consists of three degrees or risings.

L. 794. On its green breast deceitful Kidron flows,] Those who write of Palestine tell us, that the brook Kidron, or Cedron, is little else than a mass of waters made out of rains which descend from mount Olivet and mount Moria ; between which it runs, separating them from each other, and falling thence into the vale of Jehosophat.

L. 800. By Chemosh and by Moloch first it runs.] See the melancholy history of Solomon's apostasy and idolatry in 1 Kings, xi. 4, 5, 7. This hill fronts the Temple, and is before, or to the east of Jerusalem, touching upon the north ; being called to this day the Mount of Offence or scandal. Of Chemosh we have little in scripture, but that he was the abomination of the Moabites, as Milcom or Moloch of the children of Ammon.

Weaken'd by age, and by his wives betray'd,
Them first his Idols, then their gods he made.
Due east it then a little villa leaves, 804
Which flows with oil, and thence its name receives.
It stands alone, Gethsemane its name,
Well known to Christ, and still well known to fame.
Its sacred garden stretches by its side,
And forms the margin of the mountain's pride;
Whose sweet recesses, pleasantly retir'd, 810
In native grandeur swell to be admir'd.
No barren walks, or beauties forc'd, appear
To torture nature and invert the year;
But verdant alleys through the vistas ran,
And wild luxuriance scorn'd the aid of man. 815
Here tranquil breezes sigh along the shade,
Which seems for prayer and meditation made.
Here in rich arbors fruitful olives grow,
And food and health and medicine bestow.
Here the triumphant palm, for victors made, 820
Decks the green walks with its projecting shade;

L. 805. Which flows with oil, and thence its name receives.]
This etymology is generally given of it: and the *Pilgrim* says, it is called to this day the garden of olives, from nine great olives trees still growing in it; though he places it on the lowest hill, and east of it; but Fuller on the second to the north-west thereof, whom I follow.

And though oppress'd, this rival of the vine
In lonely deserts yields both fruit and wine.

Here, while mankind repos'd in balmy rest, 824
Nor dreamt of joys which Christ and his possess'd,
Ere heav'n's fair lamp had made the shades retire,
And o'er the hills diffus'd his golden fire,
He with his twelve had frequently repair'd,
Escorted safely by a heavenly guard.
Celestial love they contemplate and sing, 830
And mount to God on pure devotion's wing,
Enjoy what earth can neither take nor give,
And bask in glories which they taste, and live.

Love, genuine love, disdains its task to shun,
But glows with fervour, as a cloudless sun, 835
Lights up the torch of intellectual fires,
And with devotion all her sons inspires.
Oh, how distinct from that false flame we prize,
Which glows a moment, disappears, and dies!
The nobler passion of celestial love 840
Mounts from beneath, and grasps at scenes above;
Where holy souls in endless raptures burn,
And songs of praise incessantly return :
And as this globe which now appears so bright,
Rescu'd from chaos, shines with borrow'd light, 845

Reflects those beams, and all their radiance bears
Back to the skies, to mingle with the stars;
So love divine, whose circles further run
Than that exhaustless source of light the sun,
And from the regions of unclouded day 850
With its fair seeds impregnates human clay,
From earth's vile shores solicits us to rise,
Claim our high birth, and reascend the skies.

Love, humbler here, and loftier there, we see,
Smile in a flower, and decorate a tree, 855
Convey its charms to Philomela's notes,
And burst in raptures from a thousand throats.
Earth, air, and ocean, fragrant incense raise,
And teach forgetful man his Maker's praise.
The cheerful lark from yon green carpet springs,
Mounts like an eagle, like an angel sings: 861
Thence she surveys at the first opening dawn
Each smiling field and every gilded lawn,
Thence warbles forth her wild harmonious airs,
And Heaven accepts them as her praise and prayers.
With her each soul, whom heavenly ardors please,
Shakes off dull slumbers and inglorious ease,
Surveys the world which almost seems as bright
As when emerging from primeval night

And while the smiling earth unfolds her stores, 870
Prostrate he falls and silently adores.

O thou great Efflux of the Light divine,
Sent to fulfil thy Father's great design !
Thus didst thou all thy happy morns improve,
Thou Height of pow'r, of holiness, and love. 875
Whether tall Tabor bent his head to meet
And welcome thither thy triumphant feet ;
Or thou by hollow Kidron's doubtful spring
Didst with thy twelve celestial anthems sing,
The everlasting Father, looking down, 880
Despatch'd his heralds all thy works to own.
Attentive angels on thy accents hung,
Smil'd while they listen'd to thy heavenly tongue, }
And every anthem in full chorus sung. }
Nor are, great King, though all thy pains are o'er,
And thou art gone from earth's polluted shore, 886
Those scenes disdain'd, where once thy prayers
were pour'd
From hills and plains to heaven's Almighty Lord.
Who seeks in earnest may dismiss despair,
And in the means expect to find thee there. 890
Nor names nor places thy compassion bind,
Grace, like the air, extends to all mankind.

Almighty Goodness, I perceive thee here,
My busy heart foretold my Love was near.
Let earth recede, and all its wealth decline, 895
Peace still remains, if Christ and heaven be mine.
Oh suffer not his freedom to offend
Who fain would be, as well as call'd, thy friend,
Divine Redeemer ! of a spotless maid
The spotless offspring ! grant thy suppliant aid, 900
Who, ere the morn with light has deck'd the skies,
To thy bless'd palace lifts his longing eyes ;
Whether on old Irene's angry seas,
Near Mona's isle, or the blue Hebrides,
Or from the face of men remov'd away 905
In a mean cot compos'd of reeds and clay,
Where the inhospitable Humber roars
Devouring by degrees the neighbouring shores,
Or by dear mother Isis stretch'd along,
Or father Thames, he tunes the sacred song ;
Which, if thy name eternity can give, 911
To distant ages yet unborn shall live.

L. 903. Whether on old Irene's angry seas.] The Irish seas, about Anglesey, Man, &c. where the author began this work, since completed in several parts of England.

Return, my Muse, and sacred friendship sing,
That most divine, yet most forgotten thing.
To heavenly love thou virtue most allied 915
Of all that float on life's tempestuous tide !
But where, ah ! where art thou in life express'd,
By vice unsullied,—but in Jesu's breast ?
Now interest warps what mortals friendship call,
And selfish motives give a tinge to all. 920
The twelve apostles felt thy sacred flame,
And John sustain'd the lov'd disciple's name.
In all the actions of his soul we view
Love undiminish'd, friendship ever new.
How closely knit ! how intimately one, 925
His soul and Christ's the co-eternal Son !
What charms, what beauties in his features shine,
By love reflected from the face divine.
His eyes, his words, his gestures, and his air,
Combin'd to show his mind serene and fair ; 930
Silent and deep as crystal waters flow,
For noise betrays the shoals which lurk below.

Of those whose ardor sometimes grew too bold,
Cephas appear'd the foremost place to hold ;
Like hasty Uzzah, when it seem'd to nod, 935
His forward hand would prop the ark of God :

Weakness and warmth devotion's place supply,
And faith grew languid when his pulse was high.
Ting'd with the old traditions of their land,
The holy books they could not understand. 940
Amidst their errors Christ was pleas'd to spare
His weak disciples, who but mortals were :
He knew attachment had their zeal betray'd,
And soon forgave those faults which love had made.
Zeal Peter felt in an undue degree, 945
Yet none perform'd or suffer'd more than he ;
And though with keenness Christ sometimes
reprov'd,
No one but John was more than he belov'd :
For these and James were the illustrious three,
Chosen to witness Christ's divinity. 950

Devotion ended, all to view the town,
Forsook mount Olivet, and hasten'd down ;
For, always secret Christ disdain'd to dwell,
Or rob the world to grace a lonely cell—
Like him his servants, through their lives, design'd
To spread his truth, and benefit mankind. 956
Their love, unbounded, no distinctions knew,
Nor, fetter'd, shrunk to a contracted view ;
And as the Saviour of the world had shown
Desires repenting Publicans to own, 960

So would their frequent conversation be
With worse than these—the haughty Pharisee,
Vain, supercilious, damning all beside,
Brimfull of vice, of ignorance, and pride.
Lust sat enthron'd upon his varnish'd face, 965
While outward rites preserv'd him from disgrace.
But as vile tares mix with the purest grain,
And heaps of rubbish seeds of gold contain,
So in the mass of this dissembling crew
Some few were virtuous, though they were but few—
Some, who their senses had refus'd to close 971
When first the Sun of Righteousness arose—
Within whose souls some glimmering knowledge
glow'd,
That Christ, though hated, was the Son of God :
And from the evidence which all receiv'd, 975
Some wish'd him such, and scarcely disbeliev'd.

Weak *Nicodemus*, who the Saviour saw,
Held prepossessions with religious awe :
Him sent from God he readily confess'd,
And from his lips desir'd to learn the rest ; 980
Yet as his faith could not endure the light,
He sought instruction from our Lord by night.

Gamaliel, who in sacred science read
 Had with renown a blameless life display'd,
 Mature in wisdom, would known truths receive,
 But weigh'd their import ere he durst believe. 986
 His name the Sanhedrim declar'd of note,
 For much depended on his single vote.
 To these was *Joseph* join'd, for counsel fam'd,
 Whose ancient birth-place once was Rama
 nam'd, 990
 But time and men, which blot, change, level all,
 Old Rama now Arimathea call.
 He near the town held a convenient seat,
 Still and retir'd, without the pomp of state,
 Not poorly mean, but suited to supply. 995
 The wants of nature, not of luxury.

L. 983. Gamaliel, who in sacred science read.] It is certain, that our Saviour himself, as well as his disciples, conversed with several of the Pharisees, and sometimes ate with one of the chief of them. It is as certain, that Gamaliel was not very averse to his doctrine, from his discourse in the Acts concerning it. From whence it is not improbable that he might be present at those conferences concerning our Saviour.

L. 990. Whose ancient birth-place once was Rama nam'd.] Ramathaim Zophim, in Ephraim where Samuel lived, and whence most agree Joseph was named.

Here borrow'd streams from Siloam's neighbouring
well

In pleasing showers advanc'd by art, and fell;
Perennial verdure deck'd the happy ground,
And fertile nature breath'd her sweets around. 1000
Here grew tall cedars, and triumphant palm,
And ancient Gilead's odoriferous balm :—
This gum a native of Judea grows,
And in big tears of oily fragrance flows.

Here, with some friends retir'd, he wore away 1005
In pleasing converse half the sultry day;
Nor could these friends intruding vices fear,
Nor could intemp'rance hope to enter here:
For as the wise Egyptians at their feasts
Serv'd up a skull before their cheerful guests, 1010
So these around as grave mementos see,
And in their garden walk by Calvary.

Here death in triumph frown'd;—and wisely there
Joseph had hewn himself a sepulchre. 1014
And those like Joseph, virtuous, wise, and brave,
Dare to be cheerful while they view their grave.

L. 997. Here borrow'd streams from Siloam's neighbouring well.] The well or fountain of Siloam rises at the north-west corner of Jerusalem, I think above five hundred paces from the foot of Calvary.

Good Joseph here some happy hours employ'd,
And in retirement thus his friends enjoy'd.
Their conversation, noble and refin'd,
With sacred truths instructed every mind. 1020
The rules of justice, falsehood, wrong, and right,—
Their various natures and their sterling weight ;—
What can be seen of God by reason's sight,
And what by revelation's clearer light ;—
What of himself enlighten'd Plato knew, 1025
And what this sage from Hebrew fountains
drew ;—
How short of their great prophet Plato came—
Who even to Gentile worlds extends his fame,—
Whom happy Orpheus on his tuneful lyre
Sung like those bards who dream the gods
inspire ;— 1030
What rules of life adorn'd his sacred law,
What distant truths their ancient sages saw :—
These varied topics dwelt upon their tongues,
Which sometimes touch'd upon their country's
wrongs ;
And that great Prince both promis'd and foretold
By all the holy oracles of old, 1036

L. 1029. Whom happy Orpheus on his tuneful lyre.] That
Υδης is Moses, few question.

That great prophetic Shiloh, long design'd
His groaning country's shackles to unbind.

The weeks of Daniel well they knew drew near,
When all believ'd Messiah would appear. 1040
Hence they concluded from deliberate choice
Without a doubtful or dissenting voice,—
“ If this the age of his appearance be,
“ The son of David certainly is he.” 1044
His wond'rous deeds without disguise they saw
Greater and more than what confirm'd the law :
He spoke as mortal never spake before,
And practis'd all his doctrines taught,—and more.
Hence from these evidences all declare
His claims decisive—reason held the chair. 1050

Them thus employ'd the lov'd disciple found
In the calm limits of their happy ground,
Who with his brother and with Peter came,
Welcom'd, invited, through the Saviour's name.
These, near fair Rama's or old Gibeon's wall, 1055
By Gilgal's, Jericho's, or Jordan's fall,
Joseph had seen the trembling fiends obey,
While Christ from thousands wash'd their sins
away.

These when arriv'd, good Joseph warmly sought
To teach his friends those truths their Master taught;
Describe his birth, his spotless life, his law, 1061
And all those wonders which they heard and saw.
For now the fourth swift year declining ran,
Since Christ his public ministry began :
The actions therefore which had mark'd his course,
Furnish'd a pregnant and important source. 1066
The lepers cleans'd, the dead to vigour rais'd,
Which hosts had witness'd, which had all surpris'd,
Were facts so plain they held attention mute,
And left no room for cavil or dispute. 1070
What yet remain'd was bursting into birth,—
His tragic exit from the guilty earth,
In which the Saviour all his life resign'd,
And pour'd his precious blood to purchase all
mankind.

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND BOOK.

ST. Peter begins the relation of our blessed Saviour's life, which he opens with the accomplishment of Daniel's weeks, the sceptre's departing from Judah, and the tyranny of Herod. He then proceeds to the preparations for our Saviour's birth, the angel's salutation, &c. which he thereupon repeats at large, as Joseph, the husband of the blessed Virgin, had formerly done to Zebedee and him. Joseph's character of her before their marriage; whom having obtained of her father Heli, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. His passion and various sensations thereupon, till admonished by an angel of her purity and innocence, and the manner of her conception: on which he asks pardon for his unjust censures, and desires her to give him an account of that miraculous transaction. The Virgin relates the appearance of the angel, his salutation, and her conception by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Joseph goes on and gives the character of a good wife in the blessed Virgin, and the history of his travelling with her to see their cousin Elizabeth, who, though old and barren, the angel had declared, should shortly have a child. The way to Geba, near which lived Zacharias and Elizabeth. The description of Zachary's pleasant seat, whom they find dumb at their arrival. The salu-

tation of Elizabeth to the blessed virgin. The birth and circumcision of John the Baptist : his father Zacharias recovers his speech, and gives an account of the occasion of his strange silence, and the angel's prophecy concerning his son : his song from the first of St. Luke. Joseph and the virgin return to Nazareth, and make preparations for her son's birth : whence being recalled by the edict of Augustus, they set out for Bethlehem : a description of the pleasant way thither, and of the most remarkable places on the road, Rachel's tomb, David's well, &c. They arrive at Bethlehem late at night, and can find no lodging. The birth of Christ approaches. Joseph's concern for the virgin. He conducts her into a cave without the town. Our Saviour's birth. The angels attend him. The shepherds come to the cave early in the morning to adore him ; and on Joseph's wondering how they heard the news, two young shepherds, Strephon and Claius, give him the relation, after they had sung a carol on the subject. The angel's song at the nativity. The presentation of our Saviour at the temple, where old Simeon finds him. Simeon's song. The testimony of Anna the prophetess : the journey of the three Sages conducted by a star to Jerusalem ; who enquire for the place of our Saviour's birth, which Herod, pretending devotion, asks of the Sanhedrim. Gamaliel remembers the event, and repeats their resolution drawn from the prophecy of Micah, that it was to be at Bethlehem. Thither Herod directs the Sages, desiring they would let him know as soon as they found him, on pretence that he would follow and worship him. They find the infant, adore and

present gifts to him ; but, warned by a vision, return *incognito* to their own country, not calling at Jerusalem. Herod, being disappointed and enraged, orders the murder of the innocents. Joseph is warned by an angel to flee into Egypt with the child and his mother. As they are going by night, they look back from a hill near the town, and, by the light of the torches in the streets, discover the massacre of the infants. They then hasten to Egypt. The way thither, Syrbon lake, tomb of Pompey. They pass by Babylon, and fix at Memphis. Observations on the Pyramids. The death of Herod. Their return, and retirement to Nazareth for fear of Archelaus, Herod's son. Our Saviour's behaviour in his childhood : his going to Jerusalem at the passover with his parents, and disputation in the temple with the doctors and heads of the Sanhedrim, which Nicodemus calls to mind, observing that he presided in the schools at that time, and giving a character of our Saviour. St. John then gives them a character of Christ in his maturer years, and so affectionately describes him, that Nicodemus is desirous to wait on him ; and St. John offering to conduct him, the company break up, having appointed to meet again the next morning, in order to hear the rest of our Saviour's actions.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK II.

A Pause ensu'd when Rama's Lord had done,
Till in the midst Barjona thus begun :
“ Inspir'd with love for my great Master's cause,
Whose life displays the spirit of his laws,
I speak with ardor on the side of truth, 5
And freely tell the virtues of his youth.
Indeed, your questions stimulate my zeal,
And urge my tongue his glories to detail :
Nor will you doubt the facts these lips must speak,
Which shall no rules of just decorum break. 10

“ By foes acknowledg'd, and by friends admir'd,
By nations fam'd, by ancient kings desir'd ;

LINE 1. *A Pause ensu'd when Rama's Lord had done.*] By Rama's Lord is meant Joseph of Arimathea.

L. 12. *By nations fam'd, by ancient kings desir'd.*] Famed, for we read of the fame of Jesus, Matt. iv. 24. Luke, iv. 14. 37. and Matt. xiv. 1, Herod heard of the fame of

Priz'd by the learn'd, by prejudice confess'd,
 Rever'd by senates, and by saints caress'd;
 By reason own'd, proclaim'd by every sign, 15
 By human faith and oracles divine,
 The Saviour stands; the world attests his cause,
 And myriads bow in homage to his laws.

“ You all allow those days are come, or near,
 In which Messiah's kingdom must appear. 20
 Those mystic weeks which heavenly Daniel saw,
 Are dated from the giving of the law,
 Which all, who read his prophecies, explain,
 Must usher in the great Messiah's reign.
 From these predictions, known to sacred fame, 25
 We first obtain this more than human name.

Jesus; and in several other places. All the world, here, is no more than Jew and Gentile, or all the Roman world, which every one knows was at that time called the *πασα οικουμενη*. Nor were his miracles only known to the Syrians, Matt. iv. 24. the Phanicians, Mark, vii. 26. and afterwards the Grecians, John xii. 20. but to the Romans also.

L. 26. We first obtain this more than human name.] See our learned Mede on Daniel's weeks, which he proves must be accomplished about the time of our Saviour's coming, whichever of the assigned epochs we take for their beginning. Indeed, we have the very name of the Messiah from that prophet, Dan. ix. 25, 26. where he is called Messiah the Prince; and it is added, “ Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.”

The time is past our Rabbies all declare,
And he is come, or mortals must despair.

L. 27. The time is past our Rabbies all declare.] Malachi having foretold that the Lord should suddenly come to his temple; the Jews having lost their legislative power; the weeks of Daniel being now accomplished; the Baptist also appearing in the spirit and power of Elias; and indeed all the other prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah being completed, and all centering in this very time; it would be but very reasonable to suppose the Rabbies did at that time publicly declare their expectation of him, though we had no positive proof for such an assertion. But yet further. it is not only plain, from the Evangelists, that he was then generally expected by the whole nation of the Jews, and even by the Samaritans; but that even their great men expressed themselves freely to the same sense; thus old Simeon, whom some suppose a great Rabbi among them; and Caiaphas, who prophesied very clearly even of the Messiah's sufferings. And Josephus confirms the same; plainly acknowledging, that at that time some great Prince was, by an ancient tradition or prophecy, expected in the east, which, according to his usual flattery, he applies to Vespasian: with all which the modern Jews find themselves so pressed, that they have been forced to own, that the time when we know the Messiah did really come, was indeed that appointed for his coming; but it was delayed, they say, for the sins of the people. It is answered, the promise of the Messiah was absolute, and he was to come to save his people from their sins, when the world was in a desperate condition, and, as one of the Rabbies says, "filled with dogs, wolves, and goats, instead of men." Others of them say, that he did then really come, but is not yet declared, or revealed, remaining all this while *incognito*. And a third sort, as I find it quoted by a

Hear Israel's groans, behold their freedom broke,
 And shoulders worn beneath a foreign yoke! 30
 By Herod sway'd, of Idumean birth,
 The friend of tyrants who disgrace the earth.
 He, red with blood, old Esau's shame and stain,
 Proves his descent by hosts enslav'd and slain.
 His pride, not piety, our temple rais'd, 35
 And God is nam'd, that Herod may be prais'd.

learned person from their Bab Berachoth, say, that the Messiah was really born, and that of poor parents, and in the time of the latter temple, but was snatched away again for the sins of their nation; which is true enough, though not in the sense they intended. Nay, I find one of their Rabbies, *Sam Marochianus de adventu Messiaë*, who goes further than any of these: "I dread and fear, O Lord," says he, "lest that Jesus who was slain by our fathers, and whom the christians worship, should be that Righteous one, sold for silver, according to the prophet Amos."

L. 31. By Herod sway'd, of Idumean birth.] Herod the great, generally supposed an Edomite, though some make him of Askalon.

L. 35. His pride, not piety, our temple rais'd.] He enlarged, adorned, and as good as rebuilt, the second temple, as Josephus relates. *Antiq. lib. 15. cap. 14.* which though some learned men have denied, as Eckius and Villalpandus, yet one would think Josephus should best know, having so often officiated in it, and perhaps seen part of it building with his own eyes; nor does he at all flatter Herod, who was dead many years before he wrote, whatever he

His sword with blood the blushing pavement dyes,
 And God's High-priest becomes his sacrifice :
 This horrid crime completes his foul disgrace,
 And murder ends the Hasmonean race. 40

“ Did not this wretch our bondage first begin,
 When he invited the fierce Romans in?
 Did not his hands their cursed eagles rear,
 When proud Antonia spread their wings in air?

says of Vespasian. This temple was in truth a very magnificent structure. The main body of it was finished by Herod himself in eight years and a half, employing about a thousand carriages and eleven thousand men; it was forty-six years before the whole was completed by the Jews, as they told our Saviour.

L. 38. And God's High-Priest becomes his sacrifice.] John Hircanus, who was, if I mistake not, his father-in-law into the bargain. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. 6. and 7.

L. 44. When proud Antonia spread their wings in air.] Antonia was a castle built by Herod in honour of his friend Anthony, near the temple, at the north-west corner, on an inaccessible rock fifty cubits high; and the castle upon it was forty cubits more; it was four-square, with four towers at the corners, commanding all the temple, into which there were also secret passages from it. See the description of it, Joseph. Antiq. lib. 6 cap. 7. But not only the Roman banners, which the Jews looked upon as idols, and perhaps they were not mistaken, might offend the Zealots, when waving on the towers so near their temple; but Josephus says in his Antiq. lib. 17. cap. 18. “ that Herod did really erect a golden eagle, of an almost

Insult the temple his ambition rais'd, 45
 And basely mock the God our fathers prais'd?
 No more to legislate is Israel free;
 She scarce retains the name of liberty :
 Her sons, oppress'd, are servile clients made,
 And all their wealth is drain'd for foreign aid. 50
 The shatter'd remnants of the public spoils
 This robber left us to reward our toils.
 You know our bold, our unsuccessful fight,
 But desp'rate stand, beneath the Gaulonite ;
 What numbers perish'd in the glorious strife, 55
 Through patriot virtue or contempt of life ;
 What floods of gore forsook our heroes' veins
 To dress the soil and dye their native plains.

" While these commotions ravag'd all the land,
 David's descendants, born to give command, 60

" inestimable value, on the very portal of the temple ;
 " which Judas and Matthias, two brave young men, and
 " zealous for their law, were so much offended at, that
 " they got their friends together, and cut it all to pieces
 " with their swords and axes, though it cost many of
 " their lives."

L. 47. No more to legislate is Israel free.] This seems the most natural interpretation of the sceptre's departing from Judah ; that is, the legislative power, which till now remained with those two tribes that returned from captivity.

Who should have exercis'd a royal sway,
Had learn'd, like Christ, to suffer and obey.
From these the public voice his parents nam'd;
And, though reduc'd, allow'd his lineage fam'd;
And hence opinion scrupl'd not to own 65
The legal Heir of Israel's vacant throne :
Since both his parents drew from David's line
A right to reign which some esteem'd divine ;
While either house a clear succession brings
Of honour'd prophets or acknowledg'd kings. 70

“ But ah ! what alterations time has made,
From David's sceptre to a servile trade !
Joseph, reduc'd, by labour earn'd his bread,
And by his toils his little household fed !
But in this stage permit me to declare 75
How first I learn'd who Christ's forerunners were.
Let all the wonders I proceed to show,
Are best attested by those deeds you know ;
And but for these some truths you would receive
Hard to relate, but harder to believe. 80
But those who see what fills the list'ning earth,
Will credit prodigies which mark'd his birth :

Nor will your judgments think my language wrong,
While I relate what dropp'd from Joseph's tongue?

“ Oft have I heard the good old man repeat 85
(When half reclin'd upon an oozy seat
Against the sounding beach in peace we lay
To taste the breeze which clos'd the scorching day)
The wond'rous miracles which mark'd his life,
Urg'd him to take, and to suspect his wife. 90
Once I remember in the evening air,
When he and I and Zebedee were there,
We press'd him all to tell us what he knew
Of that conception all acknowledg'd true.
He gave consent, and, leaning on his side, 95
Drew this description of himself and bride :

“ Know then, he said, when youth's fresh
blossoms past
Had brought of seven Sabbatic years the last,

L. 98. Had brought of seven Sabbatic years the last.]
Joseph, it is probable, was a middle-aged person at the time of his marriage. The sabbatic year is either the seventh year, or seven years, a week of years : suppose him then born either in the last year of the first sabbath, or the very seventh or sabbatic year, he might be now something above forty.

advis'd by friends, I sought a virtuous wife
To share the fortunes and fatigues of life. 100
From all that Nazareth had counted fair,
And many virgins bloom'd in beauty there,
Old Heli's daughter far outshone the rest,
And all her image on my soul impress'd.
From the same source our kindred blood we drew,
And our descent can be unknown to few. 106
From David he by Nathan brings his line,
And I by Solomon deducing mine.
As join'd the roots, so now the branches join,
And, though obscure, the impulse seem'd divine. 110
Gladly he gives what I as gladly take,
And both well pleas'd the solemn contract make.
But rivals sought to snatch her from my breast,
And envy thought me too supremely bless'd.
Her virtuous fame engross'd the public voice, 115
And all united to applaud my choice.
“Judge then the anguish of my labouring breast,
When in my arms the lovely maid I press'd.—

[L. 103. *Old Heli's daughter far outshone the rest.*] Heli
said to have been the father of the blessed virgin. See
Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*.

Frozen with horror, stupid with amaze,
I gaz'd, suspected, and renew'd my gaze ; 120
Believ'd and doubted, disbeliev'd and fear'd
The grave in which I saw my hopes interr'd.
Thus he who holds a serpent in his arms
Forgets its poison to admire its charms ;
Sees it unfold its deleterious spring, 125
And with its fangs inflict a mortal sting ;
Then as the venom rankles in his veins,
He spurns the reptile, while he writhes with pains ;
Thus did I feel the intellectual sore
In due proportion as I lov'd before. 130

“ Struck with such proofs as would not let me err,
I felt indignant at her sex and her ;
While love and vengeance in my soul debate,
But love detain'd me, though I strove to hate.
Resolv'd at length, if possible, to part, 135
And extricate my too deluded heart,
To tear by force her perjur'd image thence,
Already blasted by lost innocence,
I left the room in darkness and despair 139
To shun those tears which flow'd to keep me there ;
But feeling rev'rence for her father's fame,
I labor'd to conceal her guilt and shame,

To wait awhile for some convenient hour,
And then in private put her from my door.

“ Determin’d thus, I rush’d in haste away, 145
And on the ground a widow’d bridegroom lay :
There mourn’d my fate (for gentle sleep had fled)
With restless thoughts upon a thorny bed,
And in those shadows which preclude the light 149
In sighs and groans prolong’d the tedious night.
Twice had the cheerful harbinger of day
Mark’d the dull hours to chase the shades away,
When grief exhausted left my flowing eyes,
And sudden slumbers seiz’d me by surprise.
Thus sunk in sweet forgetfulness of grief, 155
A cordial powerful to yield relief,
Around my head some beaming glories play,
Which seem’d a prelude to eternal day.
I then beheld a glorious watcher sent,
For nothing less it prov’d by the event. 160
His purple wings dispell’d the morning shade,
And gave me comfort by the light they made.
Then, while his voice and looks assail’d my heart,
His heavenly accents did these truths impart:

“ Illustrious branch of Jesse’s noble stem, 165
“ And heir of David’s throne and diadem,
“ What thoughts disconsolate, or restless fear,
“ From thy fair bride detain thee mourning here.
“ Her soul is free from those unchaste desires
“ Or guilty deeds which fan unholy fires. 170
“ As for the root of all thy jealous cares,
“ The sacred burden which the virgin bears,
“ The Holy Spirit did the gift infuse,
“ And sent an Angel to impart the news 174
“ To her and thee ;—and ere the changing moon
“ Five courses more, renew’d with light, has run,
“ Her womb shall teem with an illustrious birth,
“ That brings salvation to the sinful earth.
“ His name is *Jesus*, sacredly design’d
“ A mighty Saviour to redeem mankind.” 180

“ Thus having said, the Angel disappears ;
But all he utter’d sounded in my ears.
In unknown paths my understanding rov’d
Between the vision and the maid I lov’d. 184
Rous’d from my couch, in trembling haste I come
With sacred horror to the nuptial room,
And, like a statue frozen at the door,
Beheld the object whom I lov’d before.

(Here Joseph's warmth some tender things express'd,
A lover's feelings must describe the rest.) 190

“Awaken'd Mary lay dissolv'd in tears,
And stretch'd her hand to dissipate my fears.
Thus the sweet rose new paints its lovely hue,
When bending with big drops of morning dew!
Thus Mary's beauties stood afresh display'd, 195
And gather'd lustre from the tears she shed!
Nearer I drew, solicitous to know
If joy or grief had made these sluices flow;—
If sorrow soften'd her dear weeping eyes,
Or her rapt soul dissolv'd in extacies. 200
For, since the vision, these my thoughts employ,
But faith afforded me a source of joy.
On my approach, the blush that deck'd her face,
I soon discern'd, was all from pow'rful grace;
While the soft moisture which her eyes impart, 205
Came from those raptures which she felt at heart.

“A mutual pause succeeded, ere to break
The awful silence she assay'd to speak.
She then conjur'd me, if I held her dear,
To wait with patience her defence to hear. 210
Insist no more, I cried, on thy defence,
For Heaven vouchsafes to clear thy innocence.

An Angel-form, not Mary's self more fair,
Did all the secrets of thy soul declare,
And, in a vision of the recent night, 215
Put my suspicions and my fears to flight.
Then dry those tears, and henceforth cease to grieve,
For he who censur'd asks thee to forgive.

“Then Heaven,” she cried, “has shewn what I
conceal'd;

“The mighty secret is at last reveal'd, 220
“Which would require, should I attempt to tell,
“To gain belief another miracle.”

“By our chaste loves, I said, much injur'd fair,
And by that offspring thou art bless'd to bear,
Disclose thy soul, nor my suspicions fear, 225
Since Heav'n instructs me strange events to hear.
For if my judgment does not lead me wrong,
A train of miracles must guide thy tongue.”

“Know then, she said, three moons are fully gone,
“Indeed the fourth is swiftly rolling on, 230
“Since in my father's house I sat engag'd,
“Revolving on the great event presag'd,
“When some great monarch of mysterious birth
“Shall raise a kingdom and reform the earth.

“ This promis’d Prince, this Heav’n’s almighty Heir,
“ Engross’d my thoughts, and strangely claim’d
 my care; 236

“ Who faith, and truth, and justice should maintain,
“ And bless all nature with his peaceful reign;

“ When streams of honey from the rocks shall flow,
“ And palms and roses in the desert grow. 240

“ Supremely bless’d I thought and counted her,
“ Who at her breast the Prince of Life should bear:

“ And pleas’d, I fancied humble gifts to bring

“ To greet and decorate the infant king:—

“ Thought, if I might within my arms enfold, 245

“ Or in his cradle innocently bold

“ Seize the young hero, shelter him from harms,

“ Kiss his soft cheeks, and gaze upon his charms,

“ No monarch’s consort should my rival prove

“ In grateful songs, felicity, and love. 250

“ While musing thus, a tide of glory came,

“ And fill’d the chamber with celestial flame.

“ Then from the skies a youth, with sunbeams
 crown’d,

“ Perfum’d the air, and cast his smiles around.

“ He seem’d more lovely than the race of man, 255

“ And having bow’d, his message thus began:

“ Hail, highly favour’d, bless’d with truth and grace,
“ By Heav’n selected from the human race ;
“ Who, nobly honor’d, must that mother prove
“ Whom thou so lately didst admire and love. 260
“ Nor needst thou blush at what my lips declare ;
“ Thy virgin womb the infant God must bear,—
“ That promis’d Prince who shall the world regain,
“ And over all his Father’s empire reign.
“ Nay, do not ask how this can be perform’d,
“ For I perceive thy chastity alarm’d : 266
“ A power divine shall prove my message true,
“ And power omnipotent can wonders do.
“ The Holy Ghost, the quintessence of love,
“ Shall breathe conception on thee from above. 270
“ Thy Holy offspring *Jesus* shall be nam’d,
“ By saints rever’d, by distant ages fam’d.
“ Thus God appears in human flesh confin’d,
“ And thus becomes the Saviour of mankind.
“ But if thy faith demand some evidence, 275
“ Indulgent Heaven has sent thee proof from sense.
“ Thy aged cousin, who in deep despair
“ Long sigh’d like Sarah to embrace an heir,
“ In silver locks at length is pregnant grown,
“ And in three months shall strangely bear a son.

L. 277. Thy aged cousin.] Elizabeth.

“ Truth guides my tongue ; the facts which I have
given 281
“ Shall be accomplish’d by the hand of Heaven.”

“ He said, and paus’d : I hasten’d to reply,
“ When lo ! his pinions bore him to the sky.
“ Amaz’d I view’d, as o’er the clouds he trod, 285
“ This strange but sacred messenger of God,
“ And cried, “ My faith I can no more suspend
“ At what my reason cannot comprehend.
“ Be God’s decrees fulfill’d without delay, 289
“ Let him command, his handmaid shall obey.”

“ Scarce had I spoke and Gabriel disappear’d,
“ Ere a delightful whispering sound I heard,
“ Like what a solitary ear perceives
“ When gentle breezes fan the velvet leaves.
“ Again celestial fragrances perfume 295
“ And scatter paradise around the room.
“ Thus far I know, but can no more explain ;
“ Nor can we want what Heav’n does thus detain.
“ But this I know, that from some secret cause
“ Which seems subversive of all nature’s laws, 300
“ Grew this strange burden now so plain to see,
“ Which Heav’n, its author, has reveal’d to thee.”

“ She said : I saw her to my arms denied,
A virgin mother and a virgin bride :
And from that hour, to bless my humble life, 305
The friend and lover centred in the wife.

“ If closely view'd in her domestic state,
Her private virtues make her truly great.
Yet still I bore an undisputed sway ;
'Twas not her task, but pleasure, to obey— 310
But rarely wrong in what she did or said,
And my delight was her chief study made.
Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,
Or use my power but to display my love.
And as her soul no angry passions toss'd, 315
My heart restor'd what hapless Eve had lost ;
And where dominion yields to mutual flame,
To ask or take exactly means the same.

L. 310. 'Twas not her task, but pleasure, to obey.] Undoubtedly the blessed virgin was endued with all conjugal as well as solitary graces and virtues, and accordingly from her I here draw the picture of a good wife ; more defensibly I am sure than the contrary is often done by the Italian painters, who, from their wives, and sometimes their mistresses, usually draw their Madonas, or pictures of the blessed virgin ; nay, I have been credibly informed, that something very like it was done some years since in Ireland, where they borrowed the face of a very lovely person of quality to put upon the virgin ; I suppose, that they might have some excuse for their idolatry.

All my commands were known to her heart,
 And her requests to me were all commands. 360
 Her house was sacred, and circles of vision
 To pray, and praise, tell, and gather home;
 The rarely wander'd, never lost with me,
 Except on business, or on charity.

"The great occasion we have just survey'd 370
 Has from our home call'd forth the holy mind:
 For friendship's bonds and nature's ties unite,
 And call to old Elizabeth's home;
 Whose ear attentive e'er'd us to converse,
 And I and Mary to her cottage went. 380

"The journey thence we took Bethel we leave,
 Where Rachel's tomb our weary feet receive.
 Thence back Obed's holy cliffs we climb,
 Where David's stone lamented place we find.
 Then to the well let us descend, and come down
 Near the new walls of Bethel's ancient town. 390

L. 382. Thence forth Obed's holy cliffs we climb. The
 names of the spots mentioned in several verses.

L. 386. Near the new walls of Bethel's ancient town.
 Bethel, the ancient town of the Amorites, of which the ground
 was bought long after it was rebuilt by Hiram, and
 since rebuilt.

Here Shechem lay, where Jacob deign'd to dwell,
 Near Dothan's plain, and Sychar's famous well ;
 And Gerizim's proud altar, rais'd in spite,
 Accurs'd to every faithful Israelite. 340
 By Bethel next and Jericho we pass'd,
 Or left the first, and travell'd through the last :

L. 338. *Near Dothan's plain, and Sychar's famous well.*] I am not ignorant that some travellers, especially the Papists, make Dothan far enough from Shechem and Samaria ; nay, they describe it, reliques and all (the pit that Joseph was put in, and it is a wonder that they have not a small part of his coat too), about two hours journey from Magdala, some scores of miles from the true Dothan ; which it is plain must be near Samaria ; for when Jacob sent Joseph to look for his brethren, he told him they were at, or near, Shechem ; but they were gone thence to Dothan, whither he soon followed and found them ; which he could not so easily have done, had they driven their cattle quite over Gilboa and Kishon, almost sixty miles from Shechem. Thus can ignorance remove both plains and mountains, where faith is too weak to do it.

L. 339. *And Gerizim's proud altar, rais'd in spite.*] I say altar, not temple, because at this time they had no temple there ; what they once had being demolished, in his zeal, by John Hircanus, before the birth of our Saviour ; I say, built in spite, because, as Josephus tells us, “ Manasse, the son-in-law of Tobias, being banished from Jerusalem, “ Nehem. xiii. 28. fled to the Heathen or mungrel Samaritans, and built there an anti-temple on Mount Gerizim,”

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The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the
theoretical aspects of the problem. It is shown that the
problem is well-posed and that the solution is unique.
The second part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the
numerical aspects of the problem. It is shown that the
problem can be solved by the method of finite differences.

The third part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the
results of the numerical calculations. It is shown that the
method of finite differences is accurate and efficient.
The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the
conclusions of the paper. It is shown that the method of
finite differences is a powerful tool for the solution of
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“ Around his house rich fields of glebe remain’d,
Which avarice stole, and sacrilege detain’d ;
For Geba’s suburbs to the priests were given 355
By ancient prophets as the will of Heaven.
But these the reigning tyranny devour,
And time gives sanction to the strides of power.
He felt his loss, and mourn’d to see the crime,
But only pitied those who injur’d him. 360
The small estate on which he liv’d supplied
His various wants, but luxury denied :
In pious deeds he all the surplus spent,
And Heav’n protected what its favours lent.
Before the gate in gentle murmurs ran, 365
Gilt by the beamings of the rising sun,
A crystal stream, which from the mountain’s side
In loud cascades became the valley’s pride.
The west a fair and spacious prospect yields
Of woody foliage and luxuriant fields. 370
The bleak north wind the mountain’s top arrests,
And shields the cottage with its crescent breasts :
While olive groves from southern heats defend,
And shade, and fruit, delight, and profit blend.
And in those places where the hill inclines, 375
’Tis richly mantled with productive vines.

“ Thither arriv’d, we mutually embrac’d,
And both the guests were at the table plac’d;
When such plain viands as their fields afford,
As quickly spread the hospitable board; 380
And every sign which silence could convey,
Bade us as welcome as the orb of day.
For, strange to tell, our aged host was dumb,
As if interr’d within the silent tomb;
And all the reason we could hear assign’d, 385
Still left some shadows to obscure the mind :
For in the temple, where he tarried long,
Some unknown causes had confin’d his tongue.

“ But first Elizabeth to meet us ran,
And to the virgin thus inspir’d began: 390
“ Bless’d above women shall thy title be,
“ And yet more bless’d thy wond’rous Child than
thee.
“ Why should the mother of my Saviour grace
“ With condescension such an humble place?
“ For know, no sooner did my ravish’d ear 395
“ The sound of thy melodious accents hear,
“ Than by some impulse my prophetic boy
“ Leap’d in my womb to testify his joy.

“ And bless’d is she whose noble faith, like thine,
“ Expels all doubt of truth and power divine ; 400
“ Speedy performance shall thy wishes crown,
“ And future ages spread thy fair renown.”

Thus having said, they mutually embrace,
While tears of gladness steal from either face.
Her voice to Heav’n the pious virgin rais’d, 405
And God in songs of holy triumph prais’d.
Then in an anthem both their portions bore,
And in low rev’rence mutually adore.

“ These more than friendly salutations paid,
With old Elizabeth awhile we stay’d ; 410
Till thrice we saw revolving Cynthia wane,
And thrice replenish her fair orb again ;
When the fair matron felt a mother’s throes,
That fruitful source of happiness and woes. 414
But her sharp pangs were recompens’d with joy,
When in her arms she press’d the lovely boy.
Her anxious kindred sat around her bed,
And all rejoic’d to see her dangers fled ;
And when the eighth auspicious morning smil’d,
Hasten’d with joy to circumcise the child ; 420
Then to the infant gave the father’s name,
Prop of his age, his fortune, and his fame,

And pray'd devoutly that his soul might be
Heir of his virtues, grace, and piety. 424

“ The mother seem'd attentive to their choice,
But heard his name with this dissenting voice,—
“ The will of Heaven forbids you to proceed,
“ It must be *John* ; for God has so decreed.”
Her wond'ring friends expostulate in vain,
For all their efforts no advantage gain. 430
The father heard, and with his eyes and hands
A style and tablet from his friends demands,
Then in the ductile wax disclos'd his breast,
And the same name the mother gave, impress'd.
We, all amaz'd at this obscure event, 435
Paus'd to resolve what this decision meant.
But while we sought for causes unexplor'd,
His long lost speech was suddenly restor'd !
Facts so amazing all our wonder raise,
And turn our questions into bursts of praise. 440
With grateful joy our tuneful voices sung,
And Zach'ry's house with hallelujahs rung.
At length we ask, on his reply intent,
What his strange speech, but stranger silence,
meant ? 444

L. 432. *A style and tablet from his friends demands.*]
The ancient way of writing among most nations.

He sigh'd, and smil'd, our anxious questions weigh'd,
And thus complied with the request we made :

“ Call'd by my priestly agency to bring
“ And offer incense to all nature's King,
“ While Israel's hosts without the temple bend,
“ I saw great Gabriel in the flame descend. 450
“ Upon the altar his right hand he plac'd,
“ The other rais'd me from the ground I press'd.
“ Thy God,' he said, ' has heard thy ceaseless prayer,
“ And thou, though hoary, shalt embrace an heir.
“ His name is JOHN, and songs of holy mirth 455
“ Shall fill thy cottage at his wond'rous birth.
“ He, dear and great in God's impartial sight,
“ An abstinent devoted Israelite,
“ Divine illapses daily shall receive, 459
“ To fill his soul with peace which Heav'n will give.
“ And when prepar'd with an enlighten'd mind,
“ And render'd holy for the work assign'd,
“ His thundering voice shall sound a loud alarm,
“ And wake the vile from sin's delusive charm. 464
“ Then crowds of penitents their crimes shall mourn,
“ And, finding mercy, to their God return,
“ On faith's strong pinions pierce the yielding shade,
“ And grasp those glories which shall never fade.

‘ Thus shall the prophet mark the Saviour’s way,
‘ As morning stars proclaim approaching day.’ 470

“ He soon perceiv’d the truths I heard him tell,
“ Had made his pupil half an infidel ;
“ Then on his face such frowning aspect wore
“ As ne’er disfigur’d his fair form before ;
“ Then said.—‘ Since Heav’n must speak to man
in vain, 475

‘ Nor credit to its oracles obtain,
‘ At once experience truth and power divine,
‘ And be thyself unto thyself a sign.
‘ Till thy despair’d but promis’d blessing come, 479
I seal thy lips— At God’s command, be dumb.’

“ Trembling I knelt, and would have mercy cried,
“ But all address my fault’ring tongue denied.
“ The Angel nods, well knowing what I meant,
“ Then back to Heav’n in clouds of incense went.
“ With mental prayer I straight the throne address’d,
“ But felt those shackles which his voice impress’d ;
“ Which now remov’d, my speech returns again,
“ And frees my organs from their heavy chain.
“ Since Heav’n has thus restor’d my absent voice,
“ Let endless goodness be its happy choice! 490

“ Awake, my lyre ; I strain each tuneful string,
 “ And lift that voice which he has taught to sing.

THE SONG OF ZACHARIAS.

I.

“ Great God of Israel ! how shall we thy laud express,
 And, never satisfied with praises, bless ?
 Unutterable Goodness ! how shall we 495
 For those innumerable blessings pay
 Of this triumphant happy day,
 And what so largely we receive, restore to thee ?
 Thou hast thy chosen flock with gracious eyes
 survey’d,
 And visited with thine Almighty aid ! 500
 A great redemption for us wrought,
 Miracles surpassing thought !
 Surpassing those, when, wandering wide
 By Nilus and Euphrates’ side,
 Thou sav’dst us from Egyptian pride ! 505
 Those only types of this have been ;
 They were from slavery sav’d, but we from sin.

II.

“ Thee will we praise, thee will we sing,
 We’ll sing with ardent love and awful fear ;
 Who hast to Zion brought a great Deliverer, 510
 A mighty Saviour, and a mighty King,
 That promis’d branch of Jesse’s sacred stem,
 Heir of his Father’s diadem ;

Whom many ancient sages did descry
Through the mysterious glass of prophecy 515
In the vast heaven of dark futurity.

They saw his day though far remov'd,
And seeing smil'd, and smiling lov'd :
They saw great Judah's kingly Lion rouse,
And his lov'd nation's cause espouse. 520

Vainly whole troops against him rise ;
This vainly fights, and that as vainly flies :
From their stern jaws he tears away
The more than half devour'd prey,
And rends and tramples all our enemies. 525

III.

“ Which of you shall my lofty numbers grace,
Ye great forefathers of the chosen race ?
Thee, father Abraham, first I'll sing,
From whose bless'd loins so many nations spring,
The favourite friend of Heaven's Almighty King!
He gave his oath, and thou thy son, 531
When the bless'd gospel league begun :
Offensive and defensive 'tis,
His enemies are ours, and ours are his :

His sacred truth he did to witness take, 535
While his strong words the solid centre shake,
While heaven and earth remain'd, he never
would forsake,

But guide the faithful through the paths wherein
For ever walk sweet peace and innocence ;
All mischief ever banish'd thence, 540

All guilt and danger far remov'd,
 All that by him is disapprov'd,
 And fear, the child of sin.

IV.

“ Nor thee, thou strange prophetic boy,
 By Heav’n inspir’d ere thou didst come 545
 From the dark closet of the womb,
 Thy aged parents’ wonder, and their joy:
 Thee, though unsung, unheeded yet
 Midst crowds of heroes, will the muse forget !
 Thee, who the happy news shalt bring, 550
 The harbinger of Heaven’s high king ;
 The banners of his grace display
 To scatter pardons all the way.
 “ He comes, he comes ! I see him swift advance ;
 He comes to our deliverance : 555
 I see his orient light arise,
 Scatt’ring³ ten thousand suns around the skies :
 It flash’d through chaos, whose wild surges fell
 As when the first strange day was made,
 The fiends were all of a new world afraid, 560
 As wide it glar’d through all the inmost caves of
 hell.

L. 556. *I see his orient light arise.*] The word orient is taken in our language (unless I am mistaken) either for illustrious or eastern. I aim therein at an old but a good word which our translators here make use of, who render the word *ἀνατολή* the day-spring, though it signifies also the branch, by which name our Saviour was often foretold which sense of the word I have also given.

If there it mov'd their dread, but not their love,
What wonders shall it not perform above?
Sin to th' abyss shall sink again;
Death, the great slayer, shall himself be slain, 565
And truth and heaven-born peace for ever reign."

" Thus sung the holy patriarch, while we
Listen'd with joy, entranc'd with extacy;
Perceiv'd their bliss unmix'd with base alloy,
And in our hearts partook the parents' joy. 570
These triumphs finish'd, we prepar'd to come
To pleasant Nazareth, our native home;
And on arriving from our length'ned stay,
Recounted scenes which met us by the way,
In this small city fixing our abode 575
To wait the birth of the incarnate God

" Since first we left our native home, the sun
Through heaven's blue concave three whole moons
Had run ;
Each moment therefore warn'd us to prepare
Our little cot for Heaven's Almighty Heir. 480
Yet as the virgin felt his birth draw near,
Her hopes reviv'd to dissipate her fear.
Our little income all our wants supplied,
But left no food for vanity or pride.

Yet these conveniencies obtain'd with care, 535
 Some adverse causes would not let us share.
 A Roman edict interdicts our stay,
 And us to Beth'lem urg'd without delay,
 The ancient seat of David's royal line,
 The lovely virgin's origin and mine. 590
 This powerful edict all before me know,
 And Rome despises to relax her law.

“ 'Twas at a time when angry storms were spent,
 And nature smil'd to favour the event,
 That for our tedious journey we prepare 595
 Beneath the influence of the balmy air.
 The furious tempests seem'd involv'd in sleep,
 And gentle breezes only kiss'd the deep.
 Departing winter grew serene and mild,
 Put on smooth looks, and on creation smil'd : 600
 While in our way officious nature strews
 The blue-ey'd violet and blushing rose ;—

L. 599. *Departing winter grew serene and mild.*] Divines have differ'd much concerning the time of the year when our Saviour was born. But it does not much affect me, whether our Saviour's birth were in December, September, March, or whatever month besides ; being extremely well satisfied that I have one day appointed, whereon to celebrate the memory of that greatest blessing which God ever gave to man.

While all the flowers which decorate the spring,
 Her liberal hands in rich profusion bring.
 Walking from Naz'reth's garden of delight, 605
 Hermon and Tabor rise before our sight ;
 Our passage then across some streams we take,
 Which lose themselves in the Tiberian lake ;
 And through a well known road came gladly down
 On the third night to Salem's sacred town. 610
 Our due devotions in the temple paid,
 The night and morn we in the city stay'd,
 But left our friends in the decline of day,
 And with discourse beguil'd the tedious way.
 At length when Beth'lem's turrets we espied, 615
 I felt strong pleasures through my bosom glide,

[L. 603. *While all the flowers which decorate the spring.*] The end of winter is the beginning of the spring ; and the flowers at that time growing wild in Palestine, see Eugene Rogier, who lived some time in the very convent of Nazareth, as I find him quoted by Walker, in his life of Christ, p. 79. §. 102. " This city of Nazareth," says he, " is well called a flower ; for I might affirm, that having run through many realms, and viewed many provinces in Asia, Afric, and Europe, I never saw any comparable to this of Nazareth, for the great number of fair and odoriferous plants and flowers, which grow wild there throughout *all the seasons of the year* : for from December to April, all the little hills, fields, and way-sides are enamelled with Anemonies, Hyacinths, &c. : " and Surius to the same sense, and almost in the same words.

Which still increas'd as we our path pursued,
And all our prospects of distress subdued.
But as the light its glimm'ring rays withdraws,
When Rachel's tomb on our right hand arose, 620
Each place of fame the holy maid I show'd,
Where'er our optics could command the road.
From yonder well, I said, those waters went
Which three stern heroes brought to David's tent
'Twas there, when young, he kept his flocks,—
and there 625
Slew the rough lion and the shaggy bear.
When lo! she shriek'd, and clasp'd me to her breast
And sighing begg'd me to conceal the rest.

“ The night had now her sable mantle spread,
And birds in silence sought their mossy bed : 630
The grazing beasts were stretch'd within their lair
And drowsy bats enjoy'd the tranquil air,
When we, fatigued, to Beth'lem's suburbs come
To be enroll'd in our paternal home ;
But on approaching found ourselves too late 635
To gain admission ere they shut the gate :
And crowds, like us, in expectation stay
To mourn their lot or wait returning day.

To gain some shed we every effort try,
Till the dull moon discover'd midnight nigh, 640
But found no friend to mitigate our woe,
Or wipe those tears which now began to flow.
Harass'd with fears, with recent toils oppress'd,
Without refreshment or a place to rest, 644
We search'd the suburbs, but we search'd in vain,
For disappointment added to our pain.

“ But new occasions gave new stings to woe,
And all our fears in new directions flow !
My lovely partner felt that moment near,
Which in our state was terrible to bear :— 650
So near, it threaten'd to precede the day,
And which like death admitted no delay.
My swelling heart I could no more suppress,
But in these strains discover'd my distress :
“ O my distracted breast ! forlorn and poor, 655
“ Repell'd from each inhospitable door ;
“ Strangers, benighted, tir'd, with hunger faint,
“ And shut indignant from the home we want :
“ Still more than all, and what I least can bear,
“ She whom I love must feel the greatest
share. 660

A cave it was where cattle found repose,
 And grief retir'd to dissipate its woes,
 In storms a refuge to the shivering swain, 579
 When sudden sleet comes driving o'er the plain;
 But whether hewn by labour in the stone,
 Or form'd by nature, was to us unknown.
 Some vagrant reeds I gather'd at the gate,
 Which, mix'd with stubble, form'd her bed of state.
 These to the virgin for a couch I gave, 685
 Plac'd in the inmost corner of the cave.
 Such pomp did David's Royal Heir assume,
 Such was the furniture, and such the room
 The rest a choir of modest angels brings,
 But veil their faces with their purple wings. 690

" The moon had now with beams of borrow'd
 light

In her pale chariot made the noon of night.

The Virgin was delivered, being covered with a handsome
 white marble, in the middle of which is inlaid a green
 jasper, of about a span diameter, round which jasper is
 a circle of gold, in form of a sun, with four rays of se-
 veral colours, made of diamonds, rubies, granites, and
 other precious stones: in the circle are graven in capital
 characters these words, **HERE WAS BORN JESUS
 CHRIST OF THE VIRGIN MARY.**"

Nor human voice nor grazing beast we hear,
But rising vapours chill'd the midnight air. 694
Faint did the lamp on neighbouring Edar burn,
For lazy fogs obscur'd its glimmering urn.
The drowsy stars in sluggish motion roll,
Suspend their courses, and arrest the pole.
Pensive I sat, and clos'd my weary eyes;
But anguish, slumber to my lids denies. 700
Yet strange to tell! by Heav'n it seem'd impress'd,
Sleep for some moments stolē upon my breast.
But soon a light of supernatural birth,
Brighter than this which now illumines the earth,
Through my clos'd eyelids forc'd a piercing ray, 705
And rous'd my senses where entranc'd I lay.
Trembling I wake, and with surprise behold
The cave all delug'd with ethereal gold,
With beaming glories too refin'd for sense,
And forms celestial half departing thence. 710
In Mary's arms I saw the infant lie,
And mercy beaming from his heavenly eye;
While rays of glory from his temple pour,
And other streams of modest light devour.

L. 695. *Faint did the lamp on neighbouring Edar burn.*]
The watch-tower of Edar, in the fields of Bethlehem, north
east from the town.

I kneel adoring, and my tongue employ, 715
And lift my eyes to testify my joy.

But soon I rose impress'd with sudden fear ;
For at the cave I heard some footsteps near ;
Some sounds confus'd loud conversation yield,
Like that of rustics hastening to their field. 720

“ To shield my charge I hied me to the gate,
And in the passage either stood or sate.
But guess my wonder, when at length I spy,
Just as the morn began to gild the sky, 724

A troop of shepherds, harmless, meek, and mild,
By Heav'n directed to the new-born child ;
Who, bowing low, with earnestness inquire
For Israel's monarch and the world's Desire.
Amaz'd, I ask'd how they the news had heard,
Ere day had dawn'd, or visiter appear'd? 730

When two young men who could relate it best,
With chaplets crown'd, made answer for the rest :
Claius, who lately the lewd town had left,
Of his romantic, foolish hopes bereft, 734

Whom bounteous Heav'n, with all he valued dear,
Indulg'd in peace with his *Urania* here :

Strephon, who did with modesty pretend
To be, and was, till vice prevail'd, his friend ;

For since this time, on many a vain pretence
He left the plains and lost his innocence. 740
And now his soul, devoid of every grace,
Appears as steel'd and harden'd as his face,
Foul as those loathsome brands his body bears,
And black as that dissembling robe he wears.
His flagrant vice deceitful garments shroud 745
To veil the eyes of the deluded crowd.
I saw him lately too ambitious grown
His once lov'd Claius or himself to own.
Among the priests the title which he bears
Is Malchi—suited to the garb he wears. 750
With these associates daily he blasphemes
The Lord of glory, at whose death he aims.
Alas, how chang'd ! When innocent and young,
With Claius thus Christ's birth he sweetly sung :"

A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY THE SHEPHERDS.

STREPHON.

" How, Claius, are we dumb with joy ? 755
Come, tune thy pipe to carols sweet :
Let's welcome the celestial boy,
And throw our garlands at his feet.

CLAIUS.

“ I have a lamb as pure as snow,
Which my Uraula smiling gave ; 760
Yet this shall to his altars go,
Nor shall her eyes the victim save.

STREPHON.

“ Mistaken swain ! he ne’er requires
That with such off’rings we should part :
Go, give him pure and fair desires, 765
And praise him with a humble heart !

CLAIUS.

“ Then all my hopes and all my fears
I’ll to their ancient Lord restore,
And all my sighs, and all my tears :
His love obtain’d, I ask no more.” 770

“ In strains like these their arts the shepherds
tried,

When to my question Claius thus replied :

“ In yonder plain that stretches by the flood,
Near Edar’s tower, to guard our flocks we stood.
To cheer the night we join’d our varied powers, 775
And sooth’d by turns with songs the midnight hours.

Of ancient heroes some with tales proceed,
Who grasp'd the sword, or touch'd the trembling
reed :

Great Jacob's travels these with warmth relate,
And these examine Reuben's crime and fate, 780
Infer strong cautions and impart advice
To guard those avenues which lead to vice.
Others extol the Euphratean swain
Who stretch'd Goliath on the groaning plain;—
Tell how Philistia mourn'd her champion dead, 785
And how, confus'd, her vanquish'd armies fled :—
How valiant David fought, and lov'd, and sung,
And how the vallies with his praises rung.

“ While thus employ'd beneath the cloudless sky,
The cock's shrill notes proclaim'd the morning nigh:
We heard the sound, and saw each midnight star
Shoot oblique rays across the tranquil air ; 792
Survey'd with pleasure the decline of night,
And hail'd the prospect of approaching light.
Old Ægon, starting with amazement, cries, 795
“ See, shepherds, see, descending from the skies

L. 779. *Great Jacob's travels these with warmth relate, &c.*]
A probable subject for their songs and discourses, it being
in this very place where he pitched his tent, Gen. xxxv. 21.

“ Yon radiant light, resembling solar flame,
“ Or other beams I have not words to name.
“ It seems a prodigy of vast intent,
“ To burn the world, or mark some strange event.
“ From its new course it cannot be the sun, 801
“ For night has yet some tedious hours to run.
“ Instead of mounting, it with speed descends,
“ And to our tents its wond’rous journey bends.”

He, trembling, paus’d, though more he meant to say;
For soon the light diffus’d a flood of day. 806

The ewes arose, and into flocks divide,

The little lambs ran bleating by their side.

Our faithful dogs their sudden fears betray’d,

And none besides my old *Lycisca* bay’d. 810

We prostrate fell, as it diffus’d its rays,

Nor could sustain the splendour of the blaze.

When lo ! a youth beyond all mortals fair,

Who seem’d celestial by his mien and air,

In pleasing accents thus the silence broke, 815

And in these strains the recent wonder spoke :”

“ Bless’d swains ! I bring no terrors to affright,

“ Or mock your hopes with phantoms of the night.

“ Dispatch’d, I come from Heav’n’s Almighty
King,

“ And to your ears the happiest tidings bring. 820

“ To all mankind, on this auspicious morn,

“ Th’ incarnate Saviour of the world is born,

“ Near David’s city, where in days of old

“ The royal shepherd did protect his fold. 824

“ Go then, and find him wrapp’d in swaddling bands

“ Who grasps all nature with his mighty hands.

“ This night a stable claims his humble birth

“ Who stretch’d the skies and built the solid earth.”

Thus having said, he drew the veil aside,

And glitt’ring Angels throng’d on every side, 830

Thick as those floating motes which seem to stray,

And dance refulgent in the beams of day.

Celestial voices then our fears remove,

While thus they sing those hymns they learn’d
above :

L. 827. *This night a stable claims his humble birth.*] By the word stable there is more liberty allowed than if it had been manger, the Greek *φάρυν* signifying both, answering I think pretty exactly to *Præsepe* in the Latin. However, all antiquity have agreed that Christ was born in a cave, not a house, as Grotius proves out of Justin and others.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS.

I.

“Glory to him who reigns on high, 835
To heav’n’s imperial majesty !
To him who sits upon the throne,
The great ineffable Three-One !

II.

“Peace from the Prince of Peace we bring,
An amnesty from heav’n’s high King, 840
Who at the Saviour’s welcome birth
Scatters pardons round the earth.

III.

“Thunders *We* must use no more,
In which the law was giv’n before ;
But strive rebellious man to move 845
With mild good-will and heavenly love.”

“While hymning thus they parted from our sight,
And soar’d to heav’n amidst celestial light.
By their direction we forsook our fold,
To see those wonders which the Angels told : 850
And, thus arriv’d, desire to feast our eyes
On him who now within the stable lies.”

“ To their request consent I quickly gave,
And introduc’d them to the well-known cave. 854
With solemn rev’rence when his face they spied,
In speechless awe they gaze unsatisfied ;
But while they wonder with renew’d delight,
Each moment brought new miracles to sight.
Amaz’d they see a radiant light unfold,
And rocks and straw assume the hue of gold ; 860
Through the dark cave the bursting glories rise
With brighter beams than e’er adorn’d the skies ;
While round the babe new radiations play,
Which light afresh this artificial day.
Their rustic garlands then the swains bestow, 865
And odorous flowers in rich profusion throw ;
Some in their hands a cruse of honey bear,
Or fragrant balm’s inestimable tear.
As grateful incense these were freely given,
As such accepted by the King of Heaven. 870
These gifts bestow’d, they separate again,
And spread the tidings round the joyful plain.

“ The evening star had clos’d the seventh day
Since Christ appear’d enshrin’d in human clay ;
And on the eighth glad morn, with joy we bear 875
The holy infant to the house of prayer :

Whence, as the law directs, that sign he bore
Which mark'd our great progenitors before,
Inscrib'd in blood upon his tender skin,
Though free from actual and traductive sin ; 880
And the next moon, as holy rites requir'd,
We with the babe to Solyma retir'd,
In due obedience to Jehovah's word,
To dedicate him to his heav'nly Lord.

“ Soon as our feet to Salem's temple came, 885
The fragrant incense shot a purer flame :
In lambent smiles, as if from orders given,
It seem'd to glow with gratitude to Heaven.
The pious mother, on devotion bent,
Straight to the altar with her offering went ; 890
Of harmless doves she took a lovely pair,
While all her soul dissolv'd in grateful prayer :
These as memorials reach'd the bless'd abode,
And found acceptance at the throne of God.

“ This double sacrifice was scarcely done, 895
To purge herself and dedicate her Son,
Ere through the crowd prophetic Simeon came,
Of noted virtue and unblemish'd fame.

On him, when cold decrepit age had spread
The hoar of winter on his feeble head, 900
And he one evening in the temple stay'd,
And for redemption most devoutly pray'd,
A lovely youth, who seem'd divinely fair,
Smil'd on his face, and bade him not despair;—
Told him, though life was to the margin run, 905
And silver hairs proclaim'd his setting sun,
That ere the weary wheels of life stood still,
God would the wishes of his soul fulfil:—
That Christ should come to bless the world with
peace,
Before his tongue should from petition cease. 910
This day the same celestial form appear'd,
While in his closet he his prayer preferr'd,
Stopp'd his devotion as he prostrate lay,
And to the temple beckon'd him away.
The good old man with joy the signal takes, 915
And full of transport for the temple makes;
His feet no more their former strength denied,
And useless crutches now were thrown aside;
Through all the crowd he venerably press'd, 919
And seiz'd the child, and lodg'd him in his breast;

Then full of vigour to the altar ran,
And with this song, inspir'd by Heav'n, began :

SIMEON'S SONG.

“ Yes, now thy servant dies, he gladly dies !
This life, dear Lord, prolong no more ;
But as thou promis'dst me before, 925
In peace now close my eyes :
My eyes, which that dear object now have met,
For which so long they gaz'd in vain,
For whose delay so long I did complain :
I've seen the Sun of righteousness arise ; 930
'Tis time my glimm'ring lamps forsake the skies,
And in the shades of death in silence set.

II.

“ The world already hails his welcome birth :
Haste then, and humble gifts prepare
To meet and bless th' Almighty Heir, 935
The King of heaven and earth :
Him the lost Gentiles shall their Saviour find,
Him Heathen lands their Lord shall own,
Their Lord and God, him who alone
Imparts both eyes and eye-sight to the blind. 940

III.

“ Ah stupid nation ! Wilt thou still refuse,
Still hate thy Saviour ! Ah thrice harden'd Jews !

Grant Heaven these boding fears may not be true!
Rejected by your Prince as he by you!

But ah! what cruel truths I see 945

In the dark womb of future days!
To what a cursed throne will ye your Saviour raise,
And crown his head with thorns and infamy!
What woes, what swords, bless'd mother, are reserv'd
for thee!

IV.

“But Heaven at last to mercy seems inclin'd, 950

For see a glorious scene behind!

He comes, he comes, these eyes again shall see,

Again, dear Saviour, welcome thee,

The clouds thy chariot, and thy wings the wind!

In Zion shall appear 955

The great Deliverer:

This stubborn nation then shall strive no more,

But him who once they pierc'd adore,

Now Israel's glory, not her shame.”

“Thus having said, his soul to bliss retir'd; 960
Thus good old Simeon with a smile expir'd.

“But scenes as strange succeed to wonders past,
As each new wave rides closely on the last.
No age nor sex but must its Lord confess,
A prophet there, but here a prophetess, 965
Anna, renown'd, a matron and a wife,

For spotless virtue and a blameless life ;
Who claim'd descent from Asber's fruitful race,
Fam'd in her youth for every female grace,
Then sought by lovers, nor at last denied 970
To bless the happiest by the name of bride.
Through seven long years they no dissension knew ;
Their flame was pure, and grace preserv'd it new ;
Their hopes were mutual, and their souls the same,
In nought they differ'd but in sex and name. 975
But when he lay among the silent dead,
And his immortal part to God had fled,
A second love her heavenly thoughts denied,
And in her breast all worldly pleasure died.
She, from that hour, in hope of sacred light 980
Within the temple waited day and night ;
Fasted, and pray'd, and saw through faith the day
That in her Lord should Israel's wrong repay.
Oft her chaste soul to heaven would take its flight,
Lost and absorb'd in glory infinite : 985
When thus retir'd, no look, no thought abroad,
Nothing she knew besides herself and God ;
Nay, sometimes scarce distinct herself could call,
Abstracted from herself——for God was all.
From Heav'n she learn'd the day, the hour precise,
When we approach'd to bring our sacrifice ; 991

Then full of joy her ecstasy express'd,
And hail'd the Saviour at the virgin's breast ;
Rejoic'd with transport at the prize she found,
And quickly spread the circling tidings round ; 995
Convey'd the news to those whom God approv'd,
Who sought the Saviour, and his kingdom lov'd.

“ These scenes had scarcely ceas'd to move
surprise,

Before we heard that Sages great and wise 999
Had lately come from some strange eastern coast,
Of which the annals, not the name, are lost.
These came, Judca's new-born Prince to see,
From the fair fields of distant Araby ;
Conducted safely by the powers above 1004
Across those plains where sandy mountains move ;
Beneath the guidance of a star which shone
Full in their view with lustre not its own.

L. 1003. *From the fair fields of distant Araby.*] They came from the east, as the scripture tells us, and Arabia lay that way from the holy land. Nor am I much concerned whether they were kings, a sort of roitelets, like the Arabian Sheicks at present, or wise men only, though I rather incline to the latter, because of their poverty; since, had they been rich, we cannot suppose their presents would have left the Virgin so poor, that both Joseph and her son should still work at their trades, as we find they did.

The deserts left, these Sages came at last
 Where Moab's hills are with less trouble pass'd.
 By Selah next they move, and Abarim, 1010
 Where Edom fringes Jordan's doubtful brim.
 Then, where the flood by ancient Gilgal falls,
 They cross'd the stream, and reach'd to Salem's
 walls.

On their approach they earnestly inquire
 For Israel's Monarch and the world's Desire; 1015
 And, Heaven-directed, found our humble shed,
 And at his feet their various treasures spread.

“ When Herod heard of prodigies so great,
 He took alarm, and trembl'd for his fate.
 His guilty soul perceiv'd, the injur'd Jews 1020
 Would more than smile at this auspicious news.
 Their wrongs were dreadful: but not these alone
 Beneath his tyranny had heav'd a groan;
 With kindred blood his slipp'ry throne he dyed,
 And bath'd his sceptre in the purple tide. 1025

L. 1011. *Where Edom fringes Jordan's doubtful brim.*]
 Because it overflows all its banks in time of harvest. Josh.
 iii. 15.

L. 1024. *With kindred blood his slipp'ry throne he dyed.*]
 He murdered his wife Mariamne, his brother Pheroras, his

The flatt'ring tales his parasites had pour'd,
 And which with haste his greedy soul devour'd,—
 Those tales which lately, to enhance his fame,
 Had prostituted the Messiah's name,
 Now as an opiate to ambition fail'd, 1030
 And all the horrors of his soul reveal'd.
 But still the tyrant, though averse to good,
 Seem'd with the cunning of the fox endued,
 And hence the Sages to his palace brings 1034
 With pomp and grandeur not unworthy kings.
 Dissembling well, his malice to conceal,
 He lavish'd praises on their ardent zeal;
 And, like a tiger crouching to destroy,
 With base intentions prais'd the sacred boy.

three sons, Alexander, Aristobulus, and Antipater, the last just as he was himself expiring; and indeed if they were like their father, it were a pity that any of the breed should have been left. Vid. Jos. Antiq. lib. 6. cap. 17. and lib. 7.

L. 1029. *Has prostituted the Messiah's name.*] Eusebius in his history, gives an account of that sect among the Jews mentioned in the Evangelists, and called Herodians who, as he says, flattered Herod the Great with the title of the Messiah, celebrating a religious annual feast to his honour. It is perhaps worth remark, that all those who unjustly usurped that incommunicable title, either in those ages or since, as he, Barochebas, Judas, and in our time David Sabbati-Sevi, and others, came to miserable ends.

“ Bless’d be th’ unutterable Name,” he said, 1040
“ Whose heav’nly glories are so richly shed ;
“ Whose mercy has to Gentile worlds reveal’d
“ That promis’d Prince, from ages past conceal’d.
“ O that I could the Royal Infant greet,
“ And cast my crown and sceptre at his feet ! 1045
“ O bliss supreme ! could Herod’s hands but bear
“ The world’s great Sovereign to the house of prayer,
“ There with devotion on his mandates wait,
“ And serve in triumph greater than this state.”
Such were the snares the sanguine tyrant spread,
Such the delusion which his speech display’d !

“ Soon as our home the eastern Sages grac’d,
They saw his snares, and his intentions trac’d ;
In all his wiles their opening eyes perceiv’d
The impious frauds their innocence believ’d. 1055
Nor was the fraud by these alone sustain’d,
His Royal word the Sanhedrim conven’d ;
He then inquir’d of those most deeply read
In what our prophets had foretold and said,
And ask’d with much solicitude the place 1060
Which by our books Messiah’s birth should grace.
In their debates the Sanhedrim declare,—
But you perhaps, most learned Sir, was there

- “ I was,” Gamaliel instantly replied, 1064
 “ And heard such proofs as could not be denied.
 “ That morning in the Sanhedrim I sate,
 “ And mark’d the progress of the whole debate.
 “ It was resolv’d, that Bethl’hem, David’s seat,
 “ Though mean to view, was destin’d to be great ;—
 “ That God’s great offspring there should claim
 his birth, 1070
 “ Commence his reign, and subjugate the earth :
 “ For thus inspir’d the fam’d Morasthite sung,
 “ While with his lofty sounds fair Salem’s
 mountains rung.”

MICAH’S PROPHECY.

- “ Let Salem boast her ancient kings,
 Salem, which princely David sings ; 1075
 And Shemir’s vain apostate town,
 Her gods, her strength, her pleasure, and renown!
 Bethl’hem alone commands my choice,
 It claims my lyre, and claims my voice ; 1079 }
 In this shall Israel’s land and Gentile worlds rejoice. }
 Though mean thou art and humble now, }
 Wide shall thy spreading glories grow, }
 And all around, like fruitful Jordan, overflow : }
 For if a king’s or hero’s seat
 Must by his residence be great, 1085

All others infinitely this o'erpowers,
 Where Heav'n's high King is born as well as ours.
 Through future days the Royal babe I see,
 How long his rule, how vast his realms shall be,
 Through boundless space and time he reigns
 eternally." 1090

"The same," said Cephas, "Joseph did repeat,
 When these momentous facts he did relate.
 From hence the Sages information drew, 1093
 And facts have prov'd these great predictions true.
 Their faith grew strong when they beheld the star,
 Which rose and shone to guide them where we were,
 Nor did their feet our humble roof disdain,
 Nor did they long in Herod's courts remain,
 But mov'd with speed the Prince of Peace to find,
 For Israel's sceptre and the world's design'd. 1100
 Where ere they left his *formula* of state,
 He gave injunctions which conceal'd his hate;
 That, having found him, they should bring him word,
 That he with homage might adore the Lord. 1104

"But this fair semblance veil'd a black intent,
 So soon discover'd by the sad event;
 For they no sooner enter'd our abode,
 Than they receiv'd a messenger from God,

Whose friendly voice prohibited their stay,
And bade them travel by another way ; 1110
Nor call on Herod, who with rage pursued
The heav'nly babe, and thirsted for his blood.
Some precious gifts the Sages then prefer,
Of gold and silver, frankincense, and myrrh ;
And being thus by friendly visions warn'd, 1115
By different roads they to their homes return'd.

“ Herod no sooner found himself deceiv'd
By men whose faith his sophistry believ'd,
Than horrid oaths an easy passage made,
And all the secrets of his soul betray'd ; 1120
And, though the Sages were beyond his power,
The thunder ended in a bloody shower.
A mandate fierce 'gainst Bethlehem he pass'd,
The first on record, and we hope the last, 1124
(My bleeding heart relates the fact with pain,)
That all the infant children should be slain.
Through every street the doleful tidings fly,
And lamentations echoed through the sky.
At length from heaven a glorious angel came, 1129
The same who freed my lovely spouse from blame :
In all his visage I beheld concern,
And mingling grief and indignation burn.

But ere I spoke, he call'd aloud—" Arise,
" Nor stay one moment to express surprise :
" Depart this instant, and the babe convey 1135
" Where Egypt's subjects milder kings obey.
" There lodge awhile, nor thence attempt to move
" Till thou receiv'st commission from above.
" For Herod aims with more than hellish strife
" To war with Heaven, and take the infant's life."

" He 'd scarcely ended, ere the guards were come,
Equipp'd like butchers to supply the tomb.
The cohorts stretch before the city gate,
Where they like furies for admittance wait,
To pour upon us like a mighty flood, 1145
And bathe their daggers in the childrens' blood.

" Starting, we rose, of every sound afraid,
Nor in the town one lingering moment stay'd ;
But, warn'd by Heav'n to flee approaching fate,
We pass'd in silence through a private gate. 1150
Our weary feet had no great distance gone
Before the streets with flaming torches shone:
From a small hill we saw the dismal glare
Moving like lightning through the troubled air.

From our retreat we heard a doleful cry 1155
Of female voices which assail'd the sky ;
Shriek answer'd shriek, each groan another meets,
And cries of murder echoed through the streets.
Here frantic mothers for their children pray'd,
And fathers there the murd'rous foes invade. 1160
Here mangl'd infants from the windows fall,
There bleeding babes are dash'd against the wall,
Or with brute hands by pikes and halberts die,
While lifeless heaps on bloody pavements lie.
What nameless horrors must have form'd the scene,
Thus heard in part and indistinctly seen ? 1166

“ These mournful woes the prophet clearly saw,
If not the tyrant who should give the blow ;
And hence his language pointedly declar'd—
“ Loud lamentations were in Rama heard ; 1170
“ Her murder'd offspring weeping Rachel mourn'd,
“ And saw her joys to deepest anguish turn'd :
“ And hence her soul disconsolately griev'd ;
“ And, lost to hope, refus'd to be reliev'd.”
Such was the picture which the prophet drew, 1175
Such the events which prov'd the record true !

“ The virgin, shrieking, felt her soul distress'd,
And clasp'd the infant to her trembling breast ;

And Casius' mount so much renown'd of late
 For mighty Pompey's sepulchre and fate.
 Here first we enter'd Mizraim's fruitful soil, 1195
 Which asks no rain, water'd alone by Nile.
 Near old Bethshemesh we the river cross'd,
 Which its old gods and older name has lost.
 From Heliopolis we travell'd on
 To the proud walls of modern Babylon; 1200
 But here we durst not terminate our cares
 So near the frontiers of the tyrant's snares.

L. 1194. *For mighty Pompey's sepulchre and fate.*] Near this was Pompey the Great basely killed, and afterwards buried by a poor soldier. But the Emperor Adrian erected a beautiful monument in the same place.

L. 1197. *Near old Bethshemesh we the river cross'd.*] Now Heliopolis. Its ancient name seems to have been On, hence called Onii by Ptolemy, but by the Jews Bethshemesh, or the House of the Sun, near akin to Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun, one of the cities which, it was prophesied, should leave its idols, and speak the language of Canaan, to which place many authors think our Saviour was carried; but I go a little further, as Vida does, and fix him more in the inland country.

L. 1200. *To the proud walls of modern Babylon*] This Babylon, from whence many think St. Peter wrote his first epistle (though Bellarmine will have it Rome, rather than not get him there at all), has been a considerable place, though nothing like its name-sake in Chaldæa. It stood just at the confluence of the rivers Trajanus and Nilus.

We still pierce deeper, and at last reside
At stately Memphis, Egypt's royal pride.
Here we beheld those piles which wound the sky,
Beneath whose top the rolling clouds pass by, 1206
Huge useless wonders, wens on nature's face,
The younger brothers of the Babel race ;
Which only serve to mark ambition's springs,
The strength of art, and vanity of kings. 1210
Thus Memphis serv'd, with Providence our guide,
To give that safety Palestine denied ;
Where in obscurity we humbly mov'd,
Loving our neighbours, and by them belov'd.

“ But since the sun, to show departing day,
Shines from the west, and darts an oblique ray,
I soon must pause ; nor need I now relate,
What all must know, ambitious Herod's fate.
His end was dreadful, but with justice given,
To mark the vengeance of insulted Heaven. 1220
'Twas then an angel by divine command
Call'd us from Mizraim's to our native land :

L. 1205. *Here we beheld those piles which wound the sky.*] All that we can certainly tell the reader concerning those unwieldy wonders, the Pyramids, is, that they were made for nobody knows what, and built by nobody knows whom : they stand most of them about Memphis, on the west bank of the river.

Thus what the prophet bold'ly spoke was done,
 And "out of Egypt God recall'd his Son."
 But ere our birth-place in full view appears, 1225
 Another messenger alarm'd our fears :
 From him we gather'd, with peculiar pain,
 That Herod's son supplied his father's reign.
 Instructed thus, we to the northward cross'd,
 And reach'd at length the Galilean coast ; 1230
 And then in Nazareth fix'd the child's abode,
 The place appointed by his Father, God.
 Thus was fulfill'd what you have often seen,
 " Christ shall be nam'd or call'd a Nazarene."

" Nor will the time permit me to relate 1235
 How Angels guarded his incarnate state,—
 What pious wisdom all his life display'd,—
 How he obedience to his mother paid,—
 What pleasing prospects all our thoughts engage
 From infant weakness to maturer age. 1240
 His clustering virtues all my powers defeat,
 And join to form his character complete :

L. 1234. Christ shall be nam'd or call'd a Nazarene]
 From St. Matth ii. ult. "He shall be called," a Hebraism for "He shall be a Nazarene." But where is this prophesy? I think both in Isaiah and Zechariah; our Saviour being promised under the name of Nazarene derived from the Branch נִצְחָנָא Nazar, which signifies the same thing.

Yet one short anecdote I still must tell,
Ere with the day I bid my friends farewell :
Though many more I must in silence pass, 1245
Well worth inscribing on Corinthian brass.

“ Twelve years had scarcely mark’d our heavenly
guest,

When we repair’d to Salem’s solemn feast.
He, full of joy observing our intent,
Walk’d by our side, and to the temple went ; 1250
But when our offerings were completely past,
Towards our home we mov’d with decent haste :
When, having miss’d him, we express’d our fear,
Nor could intelligence of Jesus hear. 1254
Each troop we search, of every friend inquire,
Each youth, each matron, and each hoary sire ;
Inquir’d of all, but chief of Heli ask’d,
But gain’d no news of our celestial guest.
As some fair hind, that, wandering o’er the plain,
Escapes the hunter who her fawns had slain, 1260
In every thicket drops the briny tear,
But sinks at last the victim of her fear ;
So did the virgin through her kindred mourn,
And the next morning to the town return.

Two tedious days in fruitless search we spent, 1265
Two dreary nights we gave our sorrow vent ;
Nor rest our feet, nor sleep our eyelids found,
To ease our souls of their corroding wound.
These efforts fruitless, we at length repair
To ask assistance in the house of prayer, 1270
Resolv'd to follow the directions giv'n,
And yield submission to the will of Heav'n.
On entering here, to our surprise we found
Christ in the midst, and doctors seated round.
Each on his words with deep attention hung, 1275
And bless'd the sound of his harmonious tongue ;
Admir'd his wisdom which his age outran,
In years a child, in speech beyond a man."

" Was this the child," good Nicodemus cried,
" Who ask'd our doctors questions, and replied ?
" I then was there, presided in the schools,
" And heard him reason by establish'd rules,
" Gaz'd on his face, the wond'rous youth admir'd,
" And half believ'd him by a God inspir'd.
" Sublime and lofty, evident and clear, 1285
" All his expressions, thoughts, and notions were ;
" Each look, each word, proclaim'd celestial grace,
" Of birth superior to the human race.

[illegible]

“ And in his lodgings reason with your friend
“ On all those topics which you recommend ;
“ To find if truth will those encomiums bear 1315
“ Which so profusely grace his character.”

“ Nobly resolv’d,” the pious saint replied,
“ Grant me the honour to become your guide !” }
They join ; and all the company divide.
Joseph, well pleas’d, saluted every guest, 1320
And the next morning fix’d to hear the rest.

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD BOOK.

THE introduction, from the happiness and pleasure of pious contemplation and meditation. Nicodemus and the three disciples find our Saviour at Gethsemane. His discourse with him concerning several mysteries of the christian faith. Nicodemus departs, well satisfied with the conference; and Gamaliel being indisposed, the meeting and further relation of the three disciples is adjourned the next day from Joseph's garden to Gamaliel's house, where the apostles proceed with their discourse of our Saviour; giving an account of the Baptist's history, his character, preaching, prophecies, and baptism; to which many come, and among the rest our Saviour, who is attested there by the descent of the Holy Ghost, like a dove, accompanied with a voice from Heaven; at which the people being about to take him by force and make him a king, he retires thence into the wilderness, as well to escape their importunity, and prepare for his approaching work, as by God's permission to be tempted of the devil. The description of that part of the wilderness whither our Saviour went. In the mean while, Lucifer, alarmed at the wonders of our Saviour's birth, and his appearance now at Jordan, and doubting him to be the

true Messiah prophesied of to destroy his kingdom, had observed him at his baptism ; but frighted thence by thunder, he retires into the abyss, arises thence at midnight, and gives the signal to all the fiends to meet him; his speech on the occasion of their meeting. Moloch is for undertaking to destroy our Saviour; but Lucifer forbids him, and himself sets about it: he finds our Saviour, and accosts him in the shape of an old man almost famished, pressing him with his first temptation, to work a miracle, and change stones into bread: But our Saviour, knowing him through his disguise, rejects his temptation. Night approaching, he attacks him with others, raising a tempest, and several other ways endeavouring to affright him, but without success. The next morning he accosts him in a glorious form, though not denying himself, finding that he was discovered, but pretending love to mankind, especially to our Saviour, and offering him a banquet, which he had provided in the midst of a paradise raised in the wilderness. The song of two attendant spirits to invite our Saviour to eat of the feast which, on his refusal, vanishes; when the devil, enraged, changes himself into the form of a dragon, and, snatching up our Saviour, hurries him away through the air, and sets him on a pinnacle of the temple; whence he shews him, below, the priests, the Jews and Gentiles, in their three courts gazing at him, the Roman garrison taking their pleasure in the amphitheatre, and the castle Antonia unguarded; persuading him to descend in the flame of the altar, that the Jews might acknowledge him,

and under his conduct redeem their freedom; which he might more securely do, because God had promised to give his angels charge over him. Our Saviour having answered his text with another, the devil once more snatches him up and carries him to the top of Pisgah, representing in the air all the kingdoms of the world, with their riches and glory, and shews him the Ishmaelites travelling through the desarts with caravans of gold and spices; the kingdoms of Ethiopia, the isles of the Mediterranean, Italy, Rome, France, Britain; then Persia, over to China and India, to the East, the principal rarities whereof he describes; and still more East, cross an undiscovered Strait, a new world, whither one of his attendants was then conducting a colony of Tartars; offering him his choice of all these, or, if none would satisfy him, to raise him a throne on Pisgah, and make him King of both those worlds, if, by way of homage for them, he would bow down and adore him. At which blasphemous proposition, our Saviour instantly commands the devil to leave him, the time wherein he was permitted to tempt him being now elapsed, who accordingly vanishes away in a cloud of smoke and fire.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK III.

SOON as the night her sable reign began,
Repose was sought by bird, and beast, and man ;
Their cares concluded with declining day,
And sleep and darkness held congenial sway.
Not so the Saviour ; his unwearied love 5
Held high communion with the pow'rs above ;
His cares for man refreshing sleep deny,
On whose behalf his soul ascends the sky.
He from the world's confus'd and restless noise
Retir'd in shade to taste celestial joys. 10
His thoughts, all active, walk on nature's springs,
And view the causes and effects of things ;
Then mounting high on contemplation soar
To those fair regions where he reign'd before,
Survey that glory which he left behind 15
To take our nature and redeem mankind.

Beyond this world his vig'rous mind could trace
Angelic natures through the realms of space.
His mounting soul with ardours all its own,
In prayer and praises reach'd Jehovah's throne, 20
And left behind those cares we feel below
To stab our joys, and add new stings to woe.

Go then, my soul, through time and matter fly,
Thy Saviour follow, and ascend the sky!
Survey those oceans of unbounded space, 25
Which lose all measures both of time and place;
Where clust'ring glories in succession shine,
Through faith and practice made in promise thine.

But ere our spirits find that safe retreat,
Afflictive storms and hurricanes must beat. 30
On shelves and quicksands we are daily toss'd;
And many foundering are ingulf'd and lost.
This dangerous voyage, claiming all our care,
Asks faith, and hope, and penitence, and prayer,
Some skilful hand the helm of life to guide 35
Across the stream of passion's driving tide.
Since then such dangers lurk on every coast,
On which some millions every year are lost,

L. 17. *Beyond this world his vigorous mind could trace.*
All the visible frame or system of the creation,

Through trackless oceans we must work our way
From circling horrors to eternal day. 40

Thrice happy they who here beneath the storm,
Lodg'd in some creek, their various tasks perform;
Who watch the polar star's diminish'd rays,
Or greatly bless'd enjoy the solar blaze;
Who view the cross, and see their Saviour there,
And in his wounds find refuge in despair. 46

If from the cradle to the peaceful grave
We trace his life who died the world to save,
No dubious deeds, no problematic void
Appears to stamp his character with shade. 50

By day his miracles and language taught,
By night the Saviour close retirement sought.
His evening hours he spent in fervent prayer,
Still dews descended through the midnight air;
In awful solitude his moments pass'd, 55
And found a temple in each dreary waste.
Thus life's whole term, compos'd of light and shade,
Christ to his purposes subservient made.

Among those solitudes which he survey'd,
That was the chief in which he was betray'd: 60
'Twas here in prayer the solemn hours he spent,
When Nicodemus to his lodgings went.

Cephas and John, on finding him from home,
Straight to the garden with the Rabbi come ;
For well they knew those shades where Christ
retir'd 65

Were such exactly as their guest desir'd.
The hour was late when Nicodemus came
To see the Saviour, but conceal his shame ;
For still ambition with her shafts assail'd,
And the dread senate's future laugh prevail'd. 70

The lunar beams were darting on his face,
When these intruders reach'd the solemn place.
On their approach, as struck with sudden fear,
They paus'd awhile, not daring to draw near ;
A conscious rev'rence all their souls impress'd, 75
And quench'd the pride which stung the Rabbi's
breast.

He saw strange glories on the Saviour shine,
And seem'd entranc'd with what appear'd divine.
At length, confus'd, the trembling Rabbi spoke,
And in these words the awful silence broke : 80

“ I own, great Master, with reluctant tears
“ This nightly visit but betrays my fears :
“ Long have I felt much rev'rence for thy name,
“ But chose this hour to veil ambition's shame.

“ Our learned Sanhedrim perceive thy laws, 85
“ And half admit the justice of thy cause.
“ Thy mighty works have spread thy fame abroad,
“ And all in secret think thee sent from God.
“ ’Tis true, in public they blaspheme thy name,
“ And lend their eloquence to blast thy fame: 90
“ But did not prejudice or interest blind,—
“ Did not ambition warp the public mind,
“ Each doubtful bosom would its tribute bring,
“ And Israel’s senators adore their king.
“ When I behold thy actions and design, 95
“ I own thy mission and its proofs divine;
“ For all thy miracles and deeds of love
“ Are emanations from the throne above.
“ Hence I desire from thine own lips to know
“ Truths most important to be learn’d below.” 100

The Saviour saw the Rabbi’s heart unveil’d,
And thus with smiles his sacred lips unseal’d:
“ The works I do, appeal to every sense,
“ And hence afford convincing evidence ;
“ They silence reason, and the truth attest, 105
“ But cannot warm or renovate the breast.
“ A change far deeper my commands require
“ In every soul that would to Heaven aspire.

“ The seeds of vice have reach’d the springs of life,
“ And smother’d virtue in the dreadful strife; 110
“ Hence foul contagion reigns in every part,
“ And angry passions rule both head and heart;
“ For fallen nature does corrupt the whole,
“ The change must penetrate through all the soul.
“ From this sad source those fatal streams begin
“ Which taint the actions of mankind with sin; 116
“ And hence those torrents of corruption flow,
“ Which lead through time to everlasting woe.
“ The truths I teach to check their deadly force,
“ Aim to reform their intellectual source; 120
“ For every work is unavailing pain,
“ Which lops but branches, while the roots remain.
“ Thus a new birth, which renovates the soul,
“ And gives new life to the corrupted whole,
“ Becomes essential; and is freely giv’n 125
“ To change and qualify mankind for heav’n.
“ This second birth in all its parts I preach;
“ My saints enjoy the glorious truths I teach,
“ And, having learn’d the doctrines I explain,
“ Proclaim with me——YE MUST BE BORN
AGAIN.” 130

On facts so strange the sage, in thought profound,
Mus'd for some moments, but no utterance found :
At length replied—" My reasoning powers are
cross'd,

" And all my views are in confusion lost :

" I feel myself unable to explain 135

" How man, when aged, can be born again ?"

Our Lord rejoin'd—" Art thou so meanly read

" In all the learning of the mighty dead ?

" Canst thou no further than thy senses see,

" And ask from ign'rance—" How can these
things be?" 140

" Alas ! can others from your lectures learn

" Truths which their teachers cannot yet discern ?

" Thou know'st the senses are by reason weigh'd,

" Which in her turn is by religion sway'd.

" When reason soars, the senses quit the field ; 145

" And both must, vanquish'd, to religion yield.

" Can man's weak reason fathom boundless might,

" Or stretch its lines to measure infinite ?

" Can nature's laws creation's Lord confine,

" Or in one deed against his will combine? 150

" Has he no power to find another source,

" To form new laws, and counteract their force ?

- “ Has he no modes his favours to convey,
“ Though men know not the reason, time, or way?
“ Go track the wind, and tell me where it goes, 155
“ From what strange source the furious current
 blows?
“ How storms are form'd beneath his guardian care,
“ Who in meanders whirls the fluid air?
“ How, though invisible to human sight,
“ All bodies yield to its impetuous weight? 160
“ Thou knowest well (vain man constrain'd must
 own)
“ Millions of facts whose causes lie unknown;
“ And as this fluid, on our bodies press'd,
“ Affords an evidence by all confess'd,
“ Though the great cause in secret lies conceal'd,
“ While the effects are every day reveal'd, 166
“ So the new birth in each converted heart
“ Turns grief to joy, and bids its fears depart;
“ For know, the doctrines which I teach, contain
“ Truths most sublime, to purge man's deadly
 stain;— 170
“ Truths, which thy reason must in vain explore;
“ They roll an ocean which commands no shore.
“ Hence vanquish'd reason must forsake the field,
“ And to the light of revelation yield.

“ Thine eyes have witness’d the auspicious day
“ When God came down to visit human clay;
“ And, ere they close in death’s embrace, shall see
“ His human part suspended on a tree.
“ Then, as the serpent, in the wilds display’d 179
“ To heal those wounds the living scorpions made,
“ Imparted life to those who gasp’d for breath,
“ And rescued thousands from the jaws of death,
“ So shall the Saviour, fasten’d to the wood,
“ Procure salvation with his reeking blood;
“ And all mankind, the blessing to receive, 185
“ Must catch the streams—and those who taste,
 shall live.
“ Such are the efforts Heaven designs, to prove
“ Its unexampled, unexhausted love.”

On truths so strange the Rabbi seem’d intent,
And half a convert from the garden went. 190
From what he learn’d, more latent facts he guess’d
And grew impatient to obtain the rest;
Then to his house reluctantly retir’d,
Pleas’d with the interview his soul desir’d.

The sun had scarcely chas’d the shades of night
Ere Nicodemus hail’d returning light; 196

And to his friend Gamaliel walks in haste,
To tell the wonders of the evening past.
He, indispos'd, of Joseph did desire
That to his house th' apostles might retire. 200
Consent obtain'd, the little party came
To publish facts and spread their Master's fame ;
To mark the progress of prevailing light,
And place salvation in the Rabbis' sight.
Regal'd with viands of becoming fare, 205
With neatness dress'd without ambitious care,
Gamaliel then his anxious thoughts express'd,
And James and John and Peter thus address'd :
" The facts we heard when we assembl'd last
" Are too sublime to leave our minds in haste :
" We therefore ask you, fully to explain 211
" Those various branches which must yet remain.
" Your former statements, so distinct and clear,
" Urge this request—we therefore pause to hear."

Thus having said, renown'd Gamaliel sat, 215
While his two friends in expectation wait ;
When James arose, and with a holy sigh
Proceeded thus to give a full reply :
" If past narrations so much wonder gain, 219
What can be left for facts which yet remain ?—

Our Master's trials, abstinence, distress,
And war with Satan in the wilderness?—
His wond'rous passage through the troubled air,
By hell assail'd, though God's peculiar care?—
His ærial journey to the mountain's brow, 225
Which did its snares in endless prospects show?—
His station on the pinnacle alone,—
His being urg'd to raise his bread from stone?
The firm resistance which in all he show'd,
Proclaim'd his soul with heavenly power endow'd.

“ But first permit my willing tongue to say 231
How Christ, baptiz'd, did God's commands obey.
He, to fulfil the law, to Jordan came,
Where Zachary's son assum'd the Baptist's name.
Here Enon's stream, not far from Beth'iem's walls,
By Salim rolls, and into Jordan falls. 236
Unknown to fame, the Baptist from a child
Had liv'd retir'd in Judah's fertile wild;—
Had spent his time among the rustic swains,
Whose flocks and herds enjoy'd the hills and plains.
Austere he liv'd, remote from all resorts 241
Of base ambition and intrigues of courts.
Here, while to more exalted fortunes born,
Earth's sickly joys his soul had learnt to scorn;

For such mean clothing and coarse fare he us'd
As frugal nature bounteously produc'd ; 246
Rough camel's hair his spreading shoulders bore,
Just like those spoils which ancient heroes wore :
So far'd Elijah, when his food he found
Hung on the trees, or spread upon the ground :
Thus when wild honey on his table lay, 251
The luscious blessing made his festal day.
We learn from hence how little nature wants,
Besides those favours which her bounty grants ;
And also learn how difficult to please 255
A pamper'd palate in luxurious ease :
His life severe, his language, and his dress,
The rigid virtues of his soul express.

“ He, arm'd from Heav'n, with zeal and thunder
came

To warn the guilty of impending flame ; 260
To rouse the vile along the shores he went
By Jordan's banks, and cried aloud—“ Repent :
“ Forsake thy sins, unhappy Israel ; turn,
“ Or writhe in flames which must for ever burn.
“ Full in thy view the dreadful day appears, 265
“ Which marks the actions of departed years :
“ It comes apace ; and all within the tomb,
“ Or now alive, must meet a righteous doom.

" This glorious vault above, no more the same,
 " Shall like an ov'n teem with the spreading flame
 " Fed and sustain'd by that All-powerful breath,
 " Which gives us life—or blasts us into death; 272
 " Large flakes of fire shall roll in circles round,
 " And burn the stubble from the blazing ground.
 " Then Sadducees and Pharisees must go, 275
 " And bear their punishments in endless woe;
 " The bold blasphemer, and the atheist lewd,
 " And painted hypocrites, a vip'rous brood,
 " Shall find their portion in the burning tide,
 " And curse for ever each deceitful guide. 280

" Ye guilty souls, what led you to incline
 " To ask for grace, or shun the wrath divine?
 " Where is your church, within whose pale by
 stealth
 " Ye basely crept from policy or wealth? 284
 " Does conscience wake? are guilty fears alarm'd?
 " Does Heav'n appear with all its vengeance arm'd?
 " O brood of vipers! why against the skies
 " Maintain your warfare, and believe in lies?

L. 270. *Shall like an ov'n teem with the spreading flame.*
 This, and what follows, are the substance of Mal. iv. "Be-
 hold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven."

- “ Fly, wretches, fly from your impending fate,
“ And ask forgiveness ere it be too late. 290
“ This sacred moment grace unfolds her gates,
“ And sovereign mercy your acceptance waits ;
“ Repentance through the Saviour now display,
“ The path which leads to everlasting day. 294
“ Hereby your souls may find that healing grace
“ Which shines reveal’d to save the human race.
“ Go see the Sun of Righteousness arise,
“ And on its glories feast your longing eyes ;
“ It shines to heal each mortal wound within,
“ And cure the poison of that serpent—sin. 300
“ He, rais’d on high, compassionately brings
“ Life and salvation in his healing wings ;
“ Who look may live, though now they gasp for
 breath,
“ And find deliv’rance from the pangs of death ;
“ These the true Canaan promis’d shall possess,
“ While others perish in the wilderness ; 306
“ These through the world shall in full triumph go,
“ And through their Lord subdue each hell-born
 foe :
“ Lands yet unknown his laws shall entertain,
“ And o’er the nations the Messiah reign.” 310

“ These thundering calls the Jews, alarm’d,
receiv’d,

And numbers, listening, trembl’d and believ’d.

You know what crowds from various regions came,
And bare me witness to the Baptist’s fame—

Some who in wild Perea wander’d wide, 315,

Near Jabbock’s ford, or Arnon’s streamy side;

Penuel and Succoth many sons supply,

Whose haughty fathers were compell’d to fly;

Their hosts with Midian’s from great Gideon fled

On those fair fields where Jacob’s cattle fed;—320

From Jabesh some, where Saul such succours
brought,

And some from Gilboa where that monarch fought:

He warr’d with Heaven, and in the dreadful strife

Lost, in one day, his sons, his crown, and life.

Those various tribes with haste to Jordan go, 325

Whose fruitful fields his waters overflow.

Some from Bethsaida far more distant came,

By Heaven directed, and the prophet’s fame:

L. 315. *Some who in wild Perea wander’d wide.*] Of this Perea, Fuller thus speaks, lib. 1. p. 37. “Perea,” says he, “is a country containing all the land once belonging to Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, on the east of Jordan.”

From strong Tiberias some, and some came down
From Tabor's mount, and fam'd Bethulia's town :
These from old Shalem, Thebes, and Bezek go ; 331
From Pisgah these, and these from Jericho ;
But thousands more from royal Salem come,
And half depopulate their native home.

You know how much our elders did esteem 335
The Baptist—know the message sent to him ;
You know the honours all our senate paid,
And why they veil'd their sentiments in shade."

" Too well," Gamaliel with a sigh replied,
" I know that story and the senate's pride. 340
" These eyes have witness to the Baptist borne,
" And seen the evidence repell'd with scorn.
" Too well I know and dread the sad event ;
" For he who speaks was by the senate sent
" To seize those truths which issued from his
tongue, 345
" And try by sophistry to prove them wrong.
" My latest hour must mourn that fatal deed,
" When we rejected him—But, Sir, proceed."

" The Baptist now," said James, " had thou-
sands seen
Cleans'd from the guilt and from the power of sin.

At length the Saviour to the Herald went ; 351
 But mark the strange, the wonderful event :
 So soon as John his great Redeemer saw,
 He paus'd in silence with religious awe ;
 With prostrate rev'ence at his feet he fell, 355
 And boldly hail'd him King of Israel ;
 And, while astonish'd the spectators seem,
 Trembling he asks to be baptiz'd of him.
 The Saviour, smiling, begg'd him to desist,
 And in an instant all his fears dismiss'd ; 360
 Explain'd those mandates which he must fulfil,
 To do and suffer his great Father's will.
 The wondering Sage reluctantly obey'd
 This strange commission which his Lord display'd ;
 For well he knew that no unholy deed 365
 Could or repentance or ablution need.

“ No sooner Christ, who came mankind to save,
 Had consecrated Jordan's limpid wave,—
 Than in a moment all the clouds remove,
 And give a passage to a mystic Dove. 370

L. 368. *Had consecrated Jordan's limpid wave.*] I mean only the setting apart or consecrating the element for that sacramental use.

Its brightness seem'd too glorious to behold,
Its breast was silver, and its wings were gold ;
On every part celestial colours shine,
And all who saw it thought the form divine.
It mov'd majestic through the yielding air, 375
While Jesus knelt in ecstasy and prayer ;
Its feet at length his sacred temples press'd,
While heav'nly ardour fill'd his holy breast ;
When lo, the clouds with lambent lightning broke,
A voice was heard—and thus Jehovah spoke : 380
“ Behold my Son, by miracles approv'd,
“ My sacred Image, and my best Belov'd,
“ Whom sov'reign mercy to the world has giv'n
“ To die for sin, and bring mankind to heaven.”

“ The voice was known of heaven's eternal Lord,
And all who heard it trembled and ador'd. 386
The wondering crowd with eager kindness ran
To greet Jehovah in the form of man ;
Their hands and hearts officious honours bring,
And every voice conspir'd to hail him king. 390
But he was not for earthly kingdoms born,
The crown he wore was made of rugged thorn.
His soul had learnt to scorn earth's glittering toys,
And nobly aim at more substantial joys.

Hence, when assail'd, he to the desert flies, 395
And trusts in Him who rules both earth and skies,
To shun that fame which others court in vain,
And which too many damn themselves to gain.
'Twas here, in dreary solitude retir'd,
He met that combat which his foe desir'd. 400

“ A dreadful wild there is which stretches wide
Its lonely skirts by fruitful Edom's side ;
It stands impervious to the solar light,—
The home of horror and perpetual night,
Not once illum'd by one intruding star 405
To guide or cheer the wand'ring traveller.
Along these wastes unceasing tempests howl,
And underneath tremendous currents roll.
No flow'rs on the unwholesome surface grew,
Nor shrub nor tree, except the pois'nous yew, 410
And weeping cypress for sad hearses made,
And gloomy ebon casting deadly shade.
On these at times the furious lightnings broke,
And on their trunks the scars of thunder spoke.
If through this gloom a vacant spot was found, 415
Unwieldy serpents trail'd upon the ground ;
While birds obscene, foul harpies, vultures fell,
With all the monstrous visages of hell,

Predicted mischief by their voice and face,
And added vocal horrors to the place. 420

“ Such was the field, and such the dismal stage,
Where our great Captain did with hell engage !
Rapt in the Spirit, Jesus thither flies,
Ardent to combat for the glorious prize.
Nor did he wait this hour his strength to know ;
His pow’r already had subdued the foe. 426
He, stung with envy, insolence, and pride,
In distant worlds his vanquish’d forces tried ;
But when ambition found its efforts vain,
Transfix’d he fell with all his blasted train . 430
To those abodes of horror and despair,
Which, doom’d by Heav’n, they must for ever bear.
Sometimes indeed, as mortals may perceive,
They sally forth as God may grant them leave ;
When they, on wickedness intent, disperse 435
Mischief and murders through the universe.

“ Successful here, the fiend commenc’d his reign
By introducing anarchy and pain ;
On earth’s long shores disseminating woe,
To add new converts to the realms below. 440
Full well he knew, when man in Eden fell,
And justly earn’d the miseries of hell,

A wond'rous voice was heard from Heav'n, which
said

“ The woman's Seed shall bruise the serpent's head.”

This fact his mind revolv'd with conscious fear,

And oft he dreaded that his fall was near. 446

Himself alert, alert his watchful spies,

Had much discover'd with their prying eyes.

From spies at court who in close ambush lay,—

From spies that glitter'd in the beams of day, 450

Who in lone woods like lustful satyrs rove,

Or earthly fiends that blood and murder love,—

Much information had increas'd his store,

But still he fear'd, and still he sought for more.

Each dubious fact his active mind observ'd, 455

Was mark'd with caution, and with care preserv'd.

“ But nothing yet had so alarm'd his fear

As Christ, whose deeds he watch'd with anxious care.

He heard and trembled when the Saviour pray'd,

And, lost in darkness, felt himself afraid : 460

He saw his life with prodigies begin,

And mark'd his footsteps, but perceiv'd no sin ;

By him beheld his various wiles subdued,

And Mary's Son with much suspicion view'd.

So rushing through the clouds the vulture flies,
When at a distance he the quarry spies ;
So darts the eagle on the velvet lawn,
So from his talons springs the tender fawn ! 490

“ Confus’d and trembling, there obscure he lay,
Nor once emerg’d till night resum’d her sway :
He then arose from the deep gloom he made,
To hide his shame in her unconscious shade ;
His livid form with smother’d sulphur crown’d, 495
His glaring eyeballs blasted all the ground ;
His furious soul rekindled all its hate,
And pour’d strange curses on the hand of fate.
Incens’d to madness, he the signal gave,
And call’d his demons from each lonely grave ; 500
An instant council he design’d to form,
To fight in ambush, or assault by storm.
From earth to hell the demons haste away,
Ambitious Belial, lustful Asmoday,
And haughty Moloch, taller than the rest ; 505
Their looks and forms their various ranks express’d.
Each wretch they leave, whom they in triumph led
Through the pale mansions of the silent dead ;
All seem’d more dreadful than when first they fell,
And gaye new horrors to the glooms of hell. 510

But most the looks of hell's dread prince surprise,
Nor durst the conclave meet his burning eyes;
None could accost the dreadful tyrant;—none
But crouch'd, and sigh'd, and trembled round his
throne.

At length the fiend, that foe of God and man, 515
Unseal'd his lips, and thus enrag'd began :

“ Dishonour'd angels ! whither are we led,
“ What cursed power has struck our virtue dead ?
“ Are we so tame, so worthy more than hell,
“ We dare no more against our foes rebel ? 520
“ Are all your counsels to submit and yield,
“ And to a vagrant leave unfought the field ?
“ On earth's wide coast must Satan's empire fall,
“ And Mary's Son possess the spacious ball ?
“ Oh foul disgrace ! forbid it fate, that we 525
“ So long in vain have tasted liberty !
“ He can but thunder, and full well we know,
“ By past experience, what his bolts can do.
“ Shall earth-born man so oft his vengeance dare,
“ While made the object of peculiar care ; 530
“ And we relent, who have been basely driven
“ With peals of thunder from the verge of heaven ?

“ Will you forget the cause in which you fell,
“ And praise the despot in the flames of hell?
“ Must I forsake and abdicate my throne, 535
“ And for a monarch this young Saviour own?
“ Like you resolve to join the earth-born race,
“ Shed tears, and pray, and supplicate for grace?
“ Why else is nothing either done or said, 539
“ Worthy yourselves, your empire, or your head?
“ Go then, ye cowards, and ignobly fawn,
“ And, bound in shackles, lick the despot’s throne !”

“ Infernal Moloch could no longer bear,
But rose convuls’d with fury and despair.
Such were his looks, and such his furious eyes, 545
When Heaven in anger hurl’d him from the skies !
‘ A charge so daring, (he exclaim’d,) ’tis well
‘ That he who utters reigns enthron’d in hell;
‘ From any else, one half of this should cost
‘ More than in heav’n the most exalted lost. 550
‘ For our exertions are these legions priz’d
‘ No more, than basely to be stigmatiz’d
‘ With feeble penitence ? Can that be borne
‘ In hell, which ev’n the earthly tyrants scorn ?
‘ But words are vain : We, all of us, are true, 555
‘ Sworn foes to heaven and earth, and friends to you.

‘ Such deeds await us as shall spread our fame,
‘ And hell shall blazon Moloch’s glorious name.
‘ On Jordan’s margins, which we lately rov’d 559,
‘ To aid that cause which we so long have lov’d,
‘ I then a haughty Pharisee possess’d,
‘ And lodg’d a darling viper in his breast;
‘ And while our leader watch’d the doubtful day,
‘ Belial unseen within another lay.
‘ We heard the thunder, and the oral sound, 565
‘ And saw great Satan mounting from the ground.
‘ But still we stay’d Christ’s secret haunts to know,
‘ And watch the movements of our deadly foe;
‘ We saw his footsteps to the desert bend,
‘ And mark’d the angels who on him attend. 570
‘ To his retreats all anxious to pursue,
‘ We stand prepar’d, and wait commands from you.
‘ I to destroy him will the forests fire,
‘ In which, if man, he must in flames expire;
‘ But if these flames should unsuccessful prove, 575
‘ The solid earth shall from its axis move;
‘ The mighty mass shall to the centre rive,
‘ And in the gulf entomb him yet alive;
‘ Or rising whirlwinds rocks and hills displace,
‘ And dash all Pisgah on his mangled face.’ 580

“ He said, and paus’d, nor would for orders stay,
Till Satan rose to interrupt his way.

“ To me alone,” the gloomy tyrant cries,
“ Belongs the glory of this enterprise ;
“ I go at once to finish the design ; 585
“ Mine be the honour, as the danger mine :
“ Soon heav’n in mourning hell shall see with joy,
“ And take the life of this ill-fated boy.”

“ Thus having said, the sooty conclave rose,
And to the wild, disguis’d, their leader goes ; 590
Who, on arriving at the forest, found
The Saviour prostrate on the dewy ground ;
He, rapt in thought, his spotless prayer preferr’d
Against that onset which the tempter dar’d ;
In which we see a bright example given, 595
That man, when tempted, might apply to Heaven:
Thus to instruct us, and mark out our road,
He ask’d as man what he might take as God.

“ Soon did the tempter find his effort fail ;
O’er those who pray, he never can prevail ! 600
Yet still he tempted, and his darts preferr’d,
And vainly hop’d to find him off his guard ;
Each secret art and stratagem he tries,
False hopes, and joys, and vanities to raise ;—

Objects within, and those before his face,— 605
The solitude and horrors of the place;—
The gloomy darkness, and the gathering storm,—
And lightnings' glare which heaven's fair face
deform :

But all his arts the tempter only mock,
Or fall like hail against the solid rock; 610
Each rude assault unmov'd the Saviour bore,
And kept his mind where it was fix'd before.
Satan at first, of heavenly arms afraid,
Observ'd much caution while the Saviour pray'd ;
But when he saw that forty days had pass'd, 615
In which his lips no food had deign'd to taste,—
When he through lassitude to faint began,
And thus, though God, confess himself a man,
His deadly foe with exultation cried, 619
“ The prize is mine!”—and heaven and earth defied.
“ This Son of God shall feel the same disgrace
“ That Adam felt—the founder of their race.”

“ But soon his deep insidious guile repress'd
Those bold designs which first engross'd his breast;
He then resolv'd incognito to try 625
What secret strength, or wit, or policy,

Against his enemy would best prevail,
Who now with hunger had begun to fail. 628
To know by proof what these attacks could do,
Some tatter'd garments round himself he threw ;
Lean sallow cheeks entrench'd with care and age,
And eyes grown dim which hastening death presage,
White hairs, pale lips, long beard, and wrinkled face,
And palsied head, his foul deceptions grace.
A rustic staff his shrivell'd hands support, 635
His trembling feet to crutches had resort ;
With tottering steps he came, and bow'd his head,
And thus, dissembling, to the Saviour said:

“ Hail, Son of God, by signs from Heaven
 approv'd, 640

“ Foretold by prophets, and by God belov'd !
“ Full sixty years, through God's amazing grace,
“ These trembling feet have trod this hideous place,
“ Far from the harden'd unbelieving Jews,
“ Who to admit the prophecies refuse.
“ Long have I been by revelation warn'd, 645
“ That ere these muscles to the dust return'd,
“ These eyes, though dim, should God's Messiah see,
“ Who, like old Simeon, I behold in thee.

“ When the great Baptist from the desert came
“ To Jordan’s banks to testify thy fame, 650
“ I from my cell to hear his voice repair’d,
“ And with attention all his doctrines heard ;
“ But fondly thought, ere I forsook my home,
“ That mighty prophet—the Messiah—come.
“ But soon my heighten’d expectations fell, 655
“ When I perceiv’d he wrought no miracle ;
“ For this of old the prophet did reveal
“ To be Messiah’s evidence and seal.
“ These signs to thee on Jordan’s banks were given
“ In oral language, and the Dove from Heaven.
“ These various prodigies amidst the crowd 661
“ Having beheld, I should have cried aloud,
“ Had not some power, unseen to mortal eyes,
“ Brought to this waste the Favourite of the skies.
“ Returning thence with anxious hope to see 665
“ Him whom I lov’d, I quickly follow’d thee.
“ At length my track by dubious paths was cross’d,
“ And I, half starv’d, was in the desert lost.

“ The silver moon has form’d her little year,
“ And half another, since I wander’d here ; 670

L. 670. *And half another, since I wander’d here.*] Twenty-eight days are a proper lunar month, and twelve more are almost half another.

“ Full forty days are now completely past
“ Since I presum’d of common food to taste ;
“ On acorns, leaves, and humble roots, I fed,
“ Nor dar’d to ask the luxury of bread.
“ With trembling steps I feebly wander’d round
“ Each hill and vale, but this unhappy ground : 676
“ For this I thought no footsteps dar’d before ;
“ Within these caves I heard the lions roar.
“ Hence I inferr’d, if thou hadst enter’d here,
“ To find thee living I must needs despair ; 680
“ Nor could I hope to flee those darts of fate,
“ Which, arm’d with death, here every traveller
 wait.
“ Yet in I crept through this portentous shade,
“ Nor aught expected but to find thee dead ;
“ I then resolv’d thy hapless fate to mourn, 685
“ And with warm tears bedew thy rocky urn,
“ Thy dear remains within some grave to lay,
“ And all due honours to thy ashes pay.
“ But since with joy I find my bodings vain,
“ Though where no aliment can life sustain ;— 690
“ Since here no fruits nor wholesome herbs are
 found
“ Above the surface of this blasted ground ;

- “ If thou indeed the great Messiah be,
“ Disclose thy power, and save thyself and me ;
“ For else, our frames and haggard looks confess
“ We soon must perish in this wilderness. 696
“ Now let the Godhead in full view appear,
“ Nor meanly stay to pine unpitied here.
“ Through faith I know, if thou the word should'st
say,
“ *Be turn'd to bread,*”—these stones would soon obey;
“ Thy powerful mandate would these flints trans-
form, 701
“ And to these horrors give another form.
“ But though our fathers were with manna fed,
“ I, faint with hunger, ask no more than bread ;
“ Haste then, my Lord, these craving wants supply,
“ Or at thy feet I gasp for life—and die.” 706

“ The Saviour listen'd ; but with piercing eyes
Saw the foul tempter through the saint's disguise.
“ Full well,” said he, “ I know thy black intent,
“ And what thy looks and false pretences meant ;
“ Through all thy turns the serpent's wiles I spy,
“ And, free from dread, to thy assaults reply—
“ God's holy word forbids all anxious care
“ For earthly food—and thus 'tis written there,—

“ Man shall not only be sustain’d by bread, 715
“ But by God’s promises, as Moses said.
“ But though these trees appear as only made
“ To shield wild beasts and serpents which they
 shade,
“ Their horrors were for wisest ends design’d,
“ Unknown to thee—impervious to mankind. 720
“ If hunger drives, in neighbouring forests grow
“ Unnumber’d fruits, and thither thou mayst go:
“ Nor will great nature’s universal Lord
“ Give signs from heaven or miracles afford, 724
“ When he has deign’d these energies to give,
And still preserves those powers by which we live.
Yet the first Cause, who all these causes made,
“ Could these effects produce without their aid;
But be it known, his wisdom has denied
To grant thy wish or gratify thy pride; 730
Yet those he succours who on him depend,
And does the graces of the faithful blend,
And life confer which shall sustain no end.” }

“ The fiend abash’d, to give his curses vent,
Straight from the Saviour in confusion went. 735
Against his frauds he found each passage barr’d,
And for assaults by open force prepar’d.

Meanwhile the Son of God no shelter found ;
But, cold and hungry, press'd the barren ground.
The skies his canopy, the earth his bed, 740
And rocks of flint sustain'd his weary head ;
The falling dews his only covering form
Amidst the horrors of the gathering storm.
In this abode he sought a short repose,
To ease his soul of agonizing woes ; 745
But his short sleep was mix'd with dismal dreams
Of falling rocks, wild yells, and pitchy streams ;
For at his head unseen the tempter lay,
Striving through sleep to lead his soul astray.
But though with sinless fears the man's distress,
The God that dwelt within repels the rest. 751
Through these indeed his short-lived slumbers fled,
And left the terrors of the scene display'd.

“ Rous'd from the earth, he heard the storm
on high, 754
And infant thunders murmuring round the sky ;
These to the forest all their forces led,
And in dread volleys bellow'd o'er his head ;
From the dark clouds a dreadful torrent pour'd,
And blasting light'ning every leaf devour'd ;

Like Egypt's plagues the floods and flames conspire
 To drown with water and consume with fire ; 764
 In dread tornadoes all the stormy winds
 From their dark caves the enemy unbinds ;
 These set at large with madness rush'd abroad,
 And seas and mountains form'd their destin'd road ;
 From the four hinges of the world they came, 766
 And in their fury drove the lightning's flame ;
 On whirling rocks their earliest rage they spent,
 And rifted yews beneath their pressure bent :
 The earth below which held their roots gave way,
 And on the ground vast trunks dismember'd lay ;
 The distant pines and more contiguous oaks 772
 Suffer'd and groan'd beneath the weighty strokes.
 These had preceding hurricanes sustain'd,
 And half coeval with the world remain'd. 775
 But these in vain their long prescriptions plead,
 Their boasted honours lie among the dead :
 Now rock'd by earthquakes, twirl'd and twisted round,
 They feel convulsions heave them from the ground ;

L. 766. *From the four hinges of the world they came.*] This is Milton's thought, and a very beautiful variation for the four cardinal points.

L. 775. *And half coeval with the world remain'd.*] So it is said of the Hercynian oaks.

While fiercer blasts their ponderous masses rear,
And into shivers dart them through the air. 781
Now hills of sand come rolling with the wind,
And rocky fragments tumble fast behind ;
Here caverns yawn, bybellowing earthquakes made,
There fierce volcanoes what was left invade. 785
From sudden craters glowing stones aspire,
And earth seem'd drench'd with waves of liquid fire.
Thus mingled elements a chaos pour,
And in his face drive on the dreadful shower: 789
Nor from these woes could Christ a refuge find,
Repell'd by storms, and urg'd by flames behind.

“From these rude blasts ill wert thou shrouded then,
O Son of God !—Great friend of sinful men !
Houseless, alone, while every bird or beast 794
Sought its warm den, or press'd its downy nest.
Yet thou unshaken didst these storms sustain,
And hell's artillery only roar'd in vain !

L. 782. *Now hills of sand come rolling with the wind.*] It is usual in those countries, for vast storms, or rather hurricanes of sand to arise, and, being driven with the wind, overthrow and stifle passengers, whole caravans, and sometimes bury whole armies ; as it is reported of that of Cambyzes in the Libyan deserts. See Thevenot in his description of Egypt.

“ But still the fiend, his efforts to repeat,
Gather'd fresh malice from each new defeat. 799
The flames and storms forsook the troubled air,
And horrid darkness introduc'd despair.
No sounds were heard, no objects now appear'd ;
But gloomy silence her black standard rear'd.
These reign'd awhile, but soon a dismal noise
Pierc'd the dire gloom with lamentable cries. 805
Midst dismal rocks the awful shrieks began,
Which seem'd from man assail'd by savage man.
The shrieks grew shriller as they pierc'd the shade,
And female voices seem'd to ask for aid.
Murders and rapes resounded in the cry, 810
And clashing swords struck lightning to the eye :
By this our Lord saw numbers gasp for breath,
And struggle in the agonies of death :—
Then from the clouds some coruscations came,
And for some moments all appear'd in flame : 815
By this the Saviour instantly discern'd
Pierce bloody ruffians who compassion spurn'd :
They seem'd as hunting more for blood than prey,
And chose this place to shun the light of day.
Some cas'd in steel their javelins poise—the rest
Their arrows drew, and levell'd at his breast. 821

The bowstring twang'd to urge the flying dart,
But none could reach or terrify his heart.

“ The tempter, foil'd in what his rage design'd,
Flew to new terrors which remain'd behind. 825
Each beast appear'd which once to Eden came,
And bow'd to Adam to receive its name.
These Satan brought intending to affright
Christ in the mazes of the dreadful night.
Here from the slimy margins of the Nile 830
Came with slow steps the dreadful crocodile,
Such as the naturalist would deem a prize,
And with him serpents full as large in size.
The false hyena's face was here discern'd,
And in his looks unnatural fierceness burn'd. 835
Here growling wolves and frightful panthers came,
With hideous forms I have not words to name.

L. 833. *And with him serpents full as large in size.*] Cyrene is a dreadful desert country, to the north-west of Egypt, against the greater Syrtis, now a part of Barca; where, as modern geographers tell us, is a city, to this day, called Corena. It is inhabited by little else than such vast serpents as Europeans can scarcely believe ever were in nature; and so indeed is all Africa,—some of them so big, that eye-witnesses tell us, it is common, when any of those dreadful creatures are killed, to find a whole sheep or calf in their bellies. See Ludolphus of Ethiopia, and Vansleb of Egypt.

Across the rocks the nimble tiger flew,
With howling lions terrible to view.
Here some were found among the brutal race 840
Which nature bears not on her spacious face.
For hideous forms my tongue forbears to tell,
Were here put on by imps which came from hell.
Sometimes these beasts, by nature fierce and wild,
Gaz'd on our Lord, and look'd serenely mild. 845
Yet through their hearts the fiends diffuse new power
To seize their foe, and urge them to devour.

“ These brutal forms the grand arch traitor led,
And like a leopard darted at his head.
But when enrag'd he found the powers of hell 850
Too weak to storm this holy citadel,
He howl'd in all the anguish of despair,
And, cloth'd in flames, vanish'd in liquid air.

“ But since nor storms, nor shrieks, nor beasts,
nor night, 854
Nor those dread forms which guilty man affright,
Could move the Saviour,—spectres now invade,
And pale and ghastly flit along the shade.
With flaming torches here and flambeaus high,
A corpse moves slowly at a distance by.

The shrieking ghosts, which crowd around the bier,
Full in his face with fiery eyeballs stare, 861
With looks derang'd and hair distain'd with blood,
In which, alive, their hands had been embrued :
These as they pass groan out a piercing sigh,
Weep tears of blood and fade before the eye ; 865
Or urg'd by fiends whom dismal forms invest,
New barb their darts and point them at his breast.
But though their numbers, rage, and yells increase,
He sits unmov'd in calm and sinless peace.

“ The night at length began to wear away, 870
The ghosts retir'd before approaching day,
The beams of light array'd the golden east,
And sullen darkness travell'd to the west:
When, ere the sun unvail'd his cheerful face,
Christ bade farewell to this unholy place. 875
He, cold and hungry, to a hillock goes,
To catch those beams which free from clouds
 arose ;—
To turn his thought on the preceding storm,—
His robes to dry, and frozen limbs to warm.
'Twas here the tempter his design renew'd, 880
And the same end by different means pursued.

L. 869. *He sits unmov'd in calm and sinless peace.*] A
verse of Milton's.

Array'd in garments of becoming light,
Unlike the horrors of the recent night,
He bade him welcome on the bended knee,
With all the arts of false humility, 885
From those strange conflicts he had lately pass'd,
When in the darkness they encounter'd last.
But having found each past disguise well known,
He thought it best his character to own ;
Yet lodge his malice in pretences fair, 890
And, with intrigue, what force had lost, repair.
Hence, with compassions which his soul abhorr'd,
And daring pity, he address'd our Lord.

“ Though men have been instructed to upbraid
“ And call us foes—we sometimes give them aid.
“ Important truths our oracles decide, 896
“ And millions bow to this unerring guide ;
“ We to the rich present the golden ore,
“ And spread our tables for the weak and poor ;
“ We kill those scruples which would murder mirth,
“ And for the palate give inventions birth. 901
“ Yet for these deeds we stand condemn'd to bear
“ The crimes of men, in which we scarcely share.
“ If then for these, ungrateful as they are,
“ We watch all anxious, and such gifts prepare,

“ How much on thee must every heart bestow
“ To meet thy wants and cancel what we owe !
“ Nor can we fear thou wilt unthankful prove,
“ And with ingratitude requite our love ! 909
“ Full well I know thee, though the Son of God,
“ Both cold and hungry in this wild abode ;
“ And though thy wisdom or thy power denied
“ The poor old hermit who for bread applied,
“ My gifts, unask’d, thine eyes shall quickly see,
“ In rich profusion kept in store for thee.” 915

“ Thus having said, there instantly arose
Scenes, such as would an Eden recompose :
The sturdy oak, the all-enlivening pine,
The stately cedar form’d for work divine ;
The shady chesnut, and the walnut fair, 920
And fragrant Lotus, spread their branches there:—
The virtuous palm, which does by pressure rise,
And lift its head towards the bending skies ;
The lovely cherry reddening with a blush, 924
The golden quince which hung from every bush ;
The silken peach with noble flavour bless’d,
The plumb whose name Armenian fields confess’d ;
The juicy mulberry, which, fables feign,
From blood of lovers drew its purple stain :

On every side the mantling vineyard spread, 930
And pendent grapes hung clustering round his head.
Unnumber'd flow'rs to entertain the guest
Rose from the ground to decorate the feast.
These humbly creep to deck the arbour's side, 934
Those mount on high and glow with native pride;
And with such art were all with fruit combin'd,
That the same hand might flowers and clusters find.

“ Not far from these, all open to the view,
In spicy groves the golden orange grew :
The silver lemon next, and next to these 940
The rich pomegranate from beyond the seas ;
This was at first from Punic Carthage brought,
But bore a part in what the tempter wrought.
Beneath their feet a carpet chiefly green
Show'd nature's nice embroidery between : 945
While every hue so exquisitely grew,
As if the landscape art and nature drew.
Around the arbour in large tufts arose
The valley's lily and sweet Sharon's rose, 949
The jasmine, camphire, nard, each fragrant sweet,
Which in the spouse's garden are presum'd to meet.
While mossy benches, which might monarchs please,
Spread their soft laps as if to promise ease.

“ Full in the midst a costly table stood,
Laden with fruit and every kind of food. 955
The middle part a forest boar sustain’d,
And costly dishes cover’d what remain’d,
Such as the taste, and smell, and eyes invite,
With various show and order exquisite.
From air and ocean much provisions came,— 960
From earth those dainties most renown’d in name.
The waters furnish’d every fish that dwells
In seas or rivers, arm’d with scales or shells.
To crown the rest, and gratify the taste, 964
Rich sparkling wines a spacious side-board grac’d,
In crystal vases dang’rous to behold,
Or massy goblets form’d of Ophir’s gold.
Attendant youths and lovely virgins wait
To serve the Saviour in the pomp of state :
Their ambient hair in careless ringlets flow’d, 970
And in their faces youthful vigour glow’d.
Some hold a charger where pomegranates shine.
And some sustain a flask of generous wine.
All, deck’d with smiles, their offices enjoy’d, 974
And seem’d to wish they could be more employ’d.
Seated apart, in flowing robes array’d,
Two lovely nymphs their charms with art display’d ;

Their snares the snares of mortals far excel—
Lovely as ever tempted man to hell !
Delicious poison darted from their eyes, 980
But he who drinks inevitably dies.
Enchanting sorc'ries dwelt upon each tongue,
While thus to warbling lutes harmoniously they
sung.

THE SONG.

“ Say, what songs shall we prepare
For both worlds' immortal Heir ? 985
How our joy, our love express,
In this barren wilderness ?

“ Honey from thy feet did flow,
O'er thy head fair arbours grow,
At thy sight fierce beasts grew mild, 990
And the barren desert smil'd.

“ Welcome, welcome, welcome thrice
To this happy paradise.
Here no serpent needst thou fear,
No forbidden fruit is here. 995

“ Hark ! the amorous turtles call !
Hark ! the silver waters fall !
And a gentle spicy breeze
Whispers through the rustling trees.

“ These, the rugged tempests o’er, 1000
Storms and whirlwinds heard no more,
These the Hero all invite
To soft love and gay delight.

“ Safe and friendly all appears ;
We thy gentle ministers ! 1005
We this food before thee plac’d,
Condescend to sit and taste !”

“ Thus sung the syrens, but they sung in vain,
Nor gain’d one purpose to reward their pain.
Their keenly barb’d and well directed dart 1010
Assail’d his ears, but could not reach his heart.
No dang’rous softness crept unguarded in
To lodge the embryo of a growing sin ;
Nor though the tempter his design pursues,
And his entreaties earnestly renews, 1015
Could he prevail upon our suffering Lord
To taste or languish for the food prepar’d.

“ Alike,” said Christ, “ I scorn thy gifts and thee,
“ Thy hateful malice and thy flattery. 1019
“ Were those the friendships of thy recent boast,
“ Shown the last night when angry tempests toss’d?
“ Thy acts of kindness to this world below
“ Conduct thy children to eternal woe.

“ Thy boasted oracles, in fair disguise,
“ Are only demons speaking doubtful lies. 1025
“ That food before me which thy vassals eat,
“ Is but a vision and a specious cheat,—
“ But fancied viands of delusive air,
“ And those who taste will find them bitter fare.
“ Nor can thy power with all its pomp and state
“ A single atom of the dust create. 1031
“ Vain are those phantoms which deceive the sight,
“ As were the recent horrors of the night.
“ My soul unmov’d, from thy enchantments free,
“ Scorns to submit or take an alms from thee. 1035
“ I know thy snares, thy bold intrigues espy,
“ And all thy powers and stratagems defy.”

“ At these reproofs the tempter’s visage turn’d,
And all his breast with indignation burn’d.
“ If all (he said) the favours I present 1040
“ Must be perverted from the ends I meant;—
“ If mean suspicions haunt thy jealous breast,
“ And evil thoughts forbid thy soul to rest;

L. 1031. *A single atom of the dust create.*] Proper creation can be alone the act of infinite power. No wonder therefore that we cannot comprehend it, unless we were ourselves infinite.

“ Too mean I deem thee to approach my board,
“ And undeserving what these scenes afford. 1045
“ These costly viands others shall devour,
“ And with contempt defy thy feeble power,
“ While thou with hunger shalt unpitied pine ;
“ For know the banquet and the guests are mine.
“ Go then with tears perpetuate thy fast, 1050
“ And try how long thy abstinence will last.
“ Meanwhile I hold thee, till thy follies cease,
“ A foe to nature and a foe to peace.
“ Here then I pause, from all engagements free,
“ And stand avow’d thy open enemy.” 1055

“ No more was said ; the table disappear’d,
And harpies’ talons and their wings were heard.
The traitor soon in horrid forms appear’d,
In all that mortals ever saw or fear’d.
No more he stood array’d in peaceful light, 1060
But frown’d indignant menacing to fright.
His face display’d a hideous beak and nose ;
His canker’d breast blue poisonous scales inclose.
A dragon’s train behind the monster grew, 1064
His batlike wings were spread, with which he flew.

Where hands had been, unnatural pounces lay,
Such as became a bird or beast of prey.
With these the Son of God he seiz'd, and bore
On heights sublime from this enchanted shore.
As some strong vulture which had fiercely struck
A harmless dove near Cherith's silver brook, —
O'er woods and fields in triumph borne its prey,
And through the air pursued its pathless way ;
So did the prince of the infernal host
Convey his prize from Paran's desert coast. 1075
O'er Bozrah's rock and Edom's fruitful hill
The dragon flies, by God's permissive will.
From hence to Moserah and Hor they come,
The last renown'd for holy Aaron's tomb. 1079
Near Sodom's lake they journey now in haste,
And between Halak and Acrabbim pass'd.
From Zin and Kadesh to the right they rove,
And into Debir's airy regions move ;

[L. 1081. *And between Halak and Acrabbim pass'd.*] There is a place just at the south-west corner of the Dead-sea, called Maaleh-Acrabbim, see Josh. xv. 3. in English, the swelling up of serpents ; probably, from many of them coming up to that forlorn place from the adjoining wilder-ness, near which the Jews were plagued with fiery serpents. Opposite to this stands Mount Halak, vid. Josh. xi. 17. between which two places, I suppose, Satan took his airy journey.

In ancient days 'twas Kirjath-sephir nam'd,
 For valiant Othniel's dear-bought conquest
 fam'd ; 1085

Empire and love the victor's views divide ;
 He humbled first the Canaanitish pride,
 Then won the charming Achsah for his bride. }

“ Soon as the people this strange flight discern'd,
 Their wondering thoughts to consternation turn'd.
 A learn'd astronomer the monster show'd, 1091
 Where o'er the town he mark'd his airy road.
 Men, matrons, maids, and children, run to see
 What all esteem'd an unknown prodigy. 1094
 But in some moments the strange sight was gone,
 And Satan flew by Ziph and Jeshimon.
 On leaving Hebron to the left, they stray,
 And soon discern'd where ancient Gaza lay ;
 Where Ashdod, Askelon, and Ekron stood,
 And Gerar fair and Bezor's little flood ; 1100

L. 1085. *For valiant Othniel's dear-bought conquest fam'd.*] This Debir, which signifies an oratory, called also Kirjath-Sepher, or the city of a book, is thought to have been a Canaanitish University. It is situated in the tribe of Judah, south of Hebron, not far from the plain of Mamre. For the history of its conquest by Othniel, see Jud. i, 12, 13.

Through all Philistia was the fiend obey'd,
 And on his altars rites abhorr'd were paid.
 O'er Libnah's walls from hence the dragon sail'd,
 Leaving strong Lachish where Sennacherib fail'd;
 Then by Tekoah's forests bent his course, 1105
 And flew o'er Bethlehem with impetuous force;
 Thence passing Saveh with an easy flight,
 Imperial Salem first appear'd in sight.
 Here he survey'd its utmost southern bound,
 By sacred Zion's beauteous turrets crown'd, 1110
 Where Millo rises by Siloam's wave,
 Whose solid walls its peaceful waters lave:

L. 1102. *And on his altars rites abhorr'd were paid.*] See 2 Kings, i. 2. &c. where we read of the oracle of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron; the same, undoubtedly, with Beelzebub in the New Testament.

L. 1104. *Leaving strong Lachish where Sennacherib fail'd.*] This city was besieged by Sennacherib; but we do not read that he took it; nay, it is said that he departed from it, Kings, xix. 8, and it was one of the last which held out against Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxxiv. 7.

L. 1107. *Thence passing Saveh with an easy flight.*] This valley of Saveh, or Shaveh, is a little south of Jerusalem: it is mentioned twice, and, I think, no more, in the Holy scriptures; once by its proper name, Gen. xiv. 17. as the place where the king of Sodom met Abraham, and Melchisedech came forth and gave him bread and wine; and a second time, only by a periphrasis called the King's Dale, Sam. xviii. 18. as it is also in the former place.

L. 1111. *Where Millo rises by Siloam's wave.*] Millo,

These thence descending into Kidron pour,
 Where David's son erected Ophel's tower.
 To curse the town the rebel scarcely stay'd, 1115
 Ere he the Saviour of the world convey'd
 To Israel's temple; set apart to share
 Their faith, repentance, sacrifice, and prayer.
 Thence looking down, on Herod's tower he fell,
 And lodg'd him on the highest pinnacle. 1120

which signifies a filling, because built in the void space between Sion and Jerusalem, was begun by King David, 2 Sam. v. 9. and finished under Solomon, Jeroboam being overseer of the work, 1 Kings, xi. 27, &c.

L. 1114. *Where David's son erected Ophel's tower.*] Solomon had three palaces or houses in Jerusalem: the first, the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii. 2. like our St. James's: the second, the house of Pharaoh's daughter, 1 Kings, vii. 8. and the third, his own dwelling house, which was thirteen years in building, 1 Kings, vii. 1. which last is generally placed, in the Maps of Jerusalem, near the banks of Siloam, opposite to Millo. The tower of Ophel is placed a little easterly of this palace, near the fall of Siloam into Kidron

L. 1119. *Thence looking down, on Herod's tower he fell.*] The old tower in Solomon's temple was of the nature of a porch, and very magnificent, as it is described, 1 Kings, vi. 3. and 2 Chron. iii. 4. from both which passages we learn, that it was twenty cubits long, ten broad, and a hundred and twenty high (sacred cubits); and consequently, the temple itself reaching but to thirty cubits, this must be four times the height of it; and Herod's was not inferior.

Here still afloat and fluttering by his side,
He thus accosts him with inviting pride :

“ There, if thou canst, I destine thee to stand,
To view the city now at thy command. 1124
But if thou wouldst the Son of God be hand,
Which much I question, having so prevail’d
On thy weak body ;—just below thee see
Crowds who forsake their prayers to look at thee.
Thee from yon court the veiled priests perceive,
And half their sacrifice unfinish’d leave ; 1129
While from the next, with lifted eyes and hands,
In wild amazement Israel gazing stands.
In the third court, thick kneeling at the gate,
With equal wonder see the Gentiles wait ; 1134
They leave their victims struck with holy fear,
And think they see some God or hero here.

L. 1129. *Thee from yon court the veiled priests perceive*]
The altar whereon the sacrifices were offered, was not within
the covered part of the temple (for what should they
be done there with the smoke of so vast a number of
sacrifices), but *sub dio*, in the open air, in a court ; namely
being offered within the temple. Into this court the
Jews only came ; as into the second, none but Jews with
their sacrifices ; whence they were taken in by the Priests.
The third was the outward court, or that of the Gentiles.

“ If thou wouldst set thy injur’d nation free,
“ As Judas did—the valiant Maccabee,
“ The time is come thy wishes to fulfil ;
“ Thy people groan, and fate awaits thy will : 1140
“ Let them no more these marks of bondage bear ;
“ Go drive yon eagle proudly perching there ;
“ Display thy power on all who would oppose,
“ And with thy thundering arm transfix thy foes :

“ This fair occasion courts to mighty things,
“ Worthy of thee and thy long race of kings. 1146
“ See on the right a most attractive prize,
“ Antonia’s tower devoid of soldiers lies.
“ The Roman youth, regardless now of war,
“ Sport in great Herod’s amphitheatre ; 1150
“ Or else, by Zion’s tempting beauties won,
“ Resign their arms, and own themselves undone.
“ Thus interest, honour, call thee to the field,
“ And shew the spot where vanquish’d Rome must
yield :

“ If then the sense of injur’d virtue warms, 1155
“ If incense pleases, or ambition charms,
“ If fir’d by glory thou wouldst e’er fulfil
“ Thy sov’ reign pleasure—the Almighty’s will,—

- “ That will which ratified the stern decree 1159
“ That men and angels should submit to thee,—
“ Plunge in the sight of the admiring town,
“ Or in the altar’s flame move gently down.
“ So shall mankind becoming honours bring,
“ And men and angels hail their God and king.
“ Nor canst thou deem, if Lord of earth and skies,
“ What I propose a daring enterprise ; 1166
“ Since David’s harp thy preservation sung,
“ When with these notes the spacious temple rung :

PSALM XCI.

- “ Bless’d is the man whose sure defence
Is faith and heav’nly confidence ! 1170
Thrice bless’d who, compass’d round with hosts of foes,
Can on the everlasting arms repose !
Nor will that God whom thou thy hope dost make
Refuse to hear thy gasping cry ;
Nor will he helpless let thee die ; 1175
Nor will he thy defenceless state forsake !
See with what haste celestial guards above
At his command fly circling round,
And make thy dwelling sacred ground ! 1179
“ See with what haste they to thy succour move !
With what officious embassies of love !
These above, soft hovering o’er,
These behind and these before,
Thou canst not ask for more !

Thee these gentle guards shall bear 1185

Unhurt through yielding air
On their soft wings, and set thee lightly down,
Lest thou shouldst crush thy foot on some relentless
stone."

" He ceas'd from speaking ; when our Lord
replied,

Fix'd on the pinnacle by Satan's side ; 1190

Repulsive sternness sat upon his brow,
Which wore no frown, but seem'd serene, till now :

" I own those truths thy lips from David took,

" But feel indignant at the tongue which spoke.

" Perverted truth recoils upon thy head, 1195

" And to thy falsehoods gives a deeper shade.

" If Satan would to prophecies appeal,

" And learn from thence the doctrines they reveal,

" His eyes may find what angels have admir'd,

" By Moses written, and by God inspir'd, 1200

" When murmuring Israel went through Paran's
coasts ;

" —*Thou shalt not basely tempt the Lord of hosts.*"

" The fiend repuls'd, with inward malice burn'd ;
Yet full of guile this dark reply return'd :

" I am not hurt, nor did I think to find 1205

" Ignoble views in thy exalted mind ;

" Sublimer glories lead thee to disdain
 " Those narrow spots where monarchs fight and
 reign.
 " Thy soul expanded testifies thy birth,
 " Born to command and renovate the earth. 1210
 " Come then with me one airy journey more,
 " And see what treasures lie reserv'd in store."

" These words the tempter had no sooner said,
 Than he our Lord to Olivet convey'd,
 From whose high summit he survey'd below 1215
 Enshemesh near, and beauteous Jericho.
 From thence they move through trackless ether on,
 Not far from Gilgal and old Bohan's stone.
 His flight renew'd, they instantly proceed
 O'er Jordan's stream, nor ford nor ferry need;
 And on arriving on the eastern side, 1221
 Ed's doubtful altar all in ruins spied.

L. 1216. *Enshemesh near and beauteous Jericho.*] Enshemesh means the fountain of the sun; perhaps from some medicinal waters hereabouts, as our Bath was formerly called *Aquæ Solis, the waters of the Sun*. Beauteous Jericho—the situation of it was pleasant, said the inhabitants to the prophet, and Fuller and Surius describe it in the same manner; "the fields about it, as the latter says, being covered with orange trees, lemon trees, palm trees, and others, intermingled every where with those flowers called the roses of Jericho."

L. 1222. *Ed's doubtful altar all in ruins spied.*] Doubt-

And near to Adam's and Zaretan's town
On Pisgah's top he set the Saviour down.

" This sacred mount, as well the tempter knew,
Some ages past Jehovah chose, to shew 1226
To favour'd Moses Canaan's land, which spread
On each side Jordan to its fountain-head.
'Twas here, conceal'd, the sly seducer learn'd
How distant objects were with ease discern'd. 1230
To this he added what experience taught,
And a false optic to the Saviour brought.
His magic arts delusive scenes prepare
Of well wrought figures form'd of pliant air.
With living colours he adorn'd the whole, 1235
And spread enchantments to ensnare his soul.
Towns, cities, kingdoms, bird, and beast, and man,
Arrang'd in order, Satan thus began :

" With safety guided by my skill and care
" O'er hills, and vales, and plains, and fields of air,
" Here will we rest and fix our short abode 1241
" To view those works which men ascribe to God.

ful, because geographers cannot agree on which side of Jordan to place it.

L. 1228. *On each side Jordan to its fountain-head.*] See Deut. xxxiv. 1, 2. All the land of Gilead unto Dan, all Naphthali, Ephraim, Manasseh and Judah.

“ Whate’er thou seest, romantic, good, or fair,
 “ Which ocean’s shores and earth’s wide surface
 bear, 1244
 “ From east to west both lands and seas are mine,
 “ And ’tis my purpose to confirm them thine.
 “ That barren plain which hesitates to boast,
 “ And lies southwest, is vast Arabia’s coast.
 “ Those beasts and men that travel on the sand
 “ Are richly laden from a foreign land 1250
 “ With precious cargoes, spice, and golden ore,
 “ Which through these deserts reach a distant shore.
 “ In this warm clime the sons of Ishmael stray,
 “ And piles of wealth to Persia’s Gulf convey ;
 “ Whence they these treasures of the world disperse
 “ Through various mediums round the universe.
 “ Still further south vast Lubim’s deserts rise,
 “ Whose distant borders seem to touch the skies :
 “ To golden sands they give perfection birth,—
 “ Their lands the people think the best on earth.

L. 1253. *In this warm clime the sons of Ishmael stray.*] The Ishmaelites were some of the first land merchants, as the Phœnicians the first by sea. See Gen. xxxvii. 25.

L. 1254. *And piles of wealth to Persia’s gulf convey.*] By this way all rich Persian silks, &c. were formerly carried over land, till a passage was found out by sea.

L. 1259. *To golden sands they give perfection birth.*] The

“ But nothing here can charm thee or delight,
 “ Or recompense us for so bold a flight.

“ From these wide worlds which Lubim’s desert
 boasts

“ Of unknown realms and unfrequented coasts,
 “ The eye retires some countries to explore, 1265
 “ Which offer gold and give us something more.
 “ Behold that sea,—due west direct thine eye,
 “ Where lovely islands in its bosom lie :
 “ Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, the clusters which we see,
 “ Delude mankind, but have no charms for thee !
 “ To thy vast soul these sordid spots are mean,
 “ And must be lost, or notic’d with disdain. 1272
 “ Not fair Trinacria can afford delight,
 “ Nor are its gardens scarcely worth thy sight.
 “ Due north from hence behold that lovely plain,
 “ Wash’d by the surges of the restless main, 1276

finest dust-gold being brought from the coasts of Africa; and several regions in it taking their very names from spices, as Myrrhifera, Cinnamomifera.

L. 1260. *Their lands the people think the best on earth.*] The Abyssinians will not be persuaded but that the old Paradise was seated in their country; and there have been European authors who have reckoned it under the line.

L. 1276. *Washed by the surges of the restless main.*] The upper and lower seas, as they sometimes call them; the

- " Which barren mountains in the midst divide,
 " And leave a portion near the swelling tide.
 " Rais'd on its breast not far within the land,
 " Dost thou not see a royal city stand ; 1280
 " On seven ascents its gilded turrets shine,
 " As if erected by a hand like mine ;
 " And near that stream, ascending over all,
 " On that steep rock behold the capitol : 1284
 " That spot is Rome, the mistress of the world,
 " Which from their thrones has mighty monarchs
 hurl'd,
 " The queen of nations justly styled ! yet she,
 " At my command, shall bow her neck to thee ;
 " Her trembling senators thy sway shall own, 1289
 " And, cloth'd in purple, raise thee to her throne.

 " Or wouldst thou aim at more exalted praise,
 " And for thyself a mightier empire raise,

Adriatic to the north, and the Sicilian, Sardinian, &c. to the south.

L. 1277. *Which barren mountains in the midst divide.*]
The Apennines, which run longways through the greater part of Italy.

L. 1290. *And, cloth'd in purple, raise thee to her throne.*]
The royal Insignia were of this colour with the Romans ; and it was therefore treason for any to affect it besides the emperor.

- " A tour with me beyond these mountains go,
 " Whose horrid summits bear incessant snow;
 " And see a plain extended at our feet. 1295
 " Where power and glory may rejoicing meet.
 " It stretches where Garumna's waters creep,
 " And where the Rhine runs foaming to the deep
 " Wash'd by the British and Ligustick seas;
 " And for its ramparts claims the Pyrenees. 1300
 " The hardy natives all their neighbours call
 " The people of the fam'd Transalpine Gaul;
 " Bold, active, hardy, curious, daring, brave,
 " Proud to be free whilst others they enslave.
 " Yet all these tribes thou may's't with honour gain,
 " And crown'd with glory in Lutetia reign. 1305

L. 1294. *Whose horrid summits bear incessant snow.*]
 The Alps, where snow is said to lie unmelted in some places all the year round.

L. 1297. *It stretches where Garumna's waters creep.*]
 Garumna, now the Garonne in Aquitaine; it rises not far from Toulouse and Montpellier, whence running across the country, it falls, by Bourdeaux, into our ocean.

L. 1303. *Bold, active, hardy, curious, daring, brave.*]
 This character Cæsar gave them; and a great part of Europe has found to its sorrow, that they still retain many of their ancient characteristics.

L. 1305. *Yet all these tribes thou may's't with honour gain.*]
 They were formerly divided into as many small Septs or Cantons as England or Ireland; as the Atrebatii, the Celæ, Veneti, and twenty others.

“ They seem for virtue and adventures made,
“ Peace but their recreation, war their trade ; 1324
“ They, born for freedom, servile chains refuse,
“ And boldly death without this blessing chuse.
“ Force cannot bend them ; but persuasions move,
“ And kindness melts their stubborn souls to love.
“ If once they fix, they cannot be subdued, 1329
“ But wade through fire, or rivers fill’d with blood.
“ This thoughtful tribe thy eloquence may charm,
“ And with just views of thy ambition warm,
“ Their manners polish, and their gold refine,
“ And fill their souls with virtues such as thine :—
“ Bid through their means discordant tumults cease,
“ And raise the standard of eternal peace. 1336

“ Or if thou wilt by bold coercion sway,
“ And make thy word the law they shall obey,
“ Aided by me thou shalt the sceptre gain,
“ And like a tyrant absolutely reign. 1340
“ But ere their hearts of steel can be subdued,
“ The coasts of Albion must be dyed with blood.
“ Shouldst thou desire their firm resolves to know,
“ This glass will facts in retrospection show. 1344

danger of being taken by the Romans ; so careful were the Phœnicians to conceal from other nations their commercial intercourse with Britain.

“ On Gallia’s shores behold what myriads bear
“ With horrid front the instruments of war ;
“ See horse and foot in dusky squadrons run,
“ And shields and halberts glitter to the sun.
“ Androgeus exil’d from his native throne, 1349
“ Presents the cause which Cæsar makes his own.
“ See how they charge, retreat, and charge again ;
“ See weighty cataphracts and iron men : 1352
“ Pikes, javelins, swords, reflect the waving light,
“ And cross the channel to commence the fight.
“ The Morine seas they cut with sail or oar, 1355
“ And reach with trouble the Rutupian shore.
“ Near Dubris’ point they blacken all the strand,
“ A thousand chariots plough the yielding sand ;
“ Ten thousand warriors lift the weighty spear,
“ And darts and swords and battle-axes rear ; 1360
“ With hideous shouts they pierce the rending skies,
“ And march to grapple with their enemies.

L. 1349: *Androgeus exil’d from his native throne.*] Some call him Androgeus, others Mandubracius, a British Prince, who fled to Cæsar for succour, and assisted him against Cassibelan and his native country.

L. 1355: *The Morine seas they cut with sail and oar.*] So the strait was called between England and France.

L. 1356: *And reach with trouble the Rutupian shore.*] The Rutupium of the ancients, is supposed to have been the same with our Richborough.

“ That silver steed which proudly trots around,
 “ And paws the sand, and beats the echoing
 ground,— 1364

“ Which moves in state—its rider’s glories shares,—

“ The brave, the great Cassibelan it bears.

“ Discordant interests he together ties,

“ And nations arm’d are his unfeign’d allies.

“ Though Rome’s commanders all the world esteem,

“ None can contrive, intrigue, and act like him ;

“ He ends with honour what he undertakes, 1371

“ And advantageous past misfortunes makes ;

“ Cool, brave, wise, generous, all mankind allow,

“ And, but his own, each tongue declares him so.

“ These hosts and heroes wait at thy commands,

“ If thou but ask them at my generous hands. 1376

“ Thus have I offer’d all the world can boast

“ Of wealth or glory on the western coast.

“ But small those portions which appear reveal’d,

“ Compar’d with treasures India holds conceal’d.

“ In moving thither where these riches lie, 1381

“ Renown’d Damascus courts thy wandering eye,

L. 1366. *The brave, the great Cassibelan it bears.*] Cassibelan was Generalissimo of all the British forces.

L. 1382. *Renown’d Damascus courts thy wandering eye.*]

The first thing I noticed when I stepped
 out of the car was the smell of
 the sea. It was a salty, sweet
 scent that I had never before. I
 had heard that the ocean was beautiful,
 but I had never experienced it. The
 waves were crashing against the shore,
 and the sun was shining brightly. I
 felt like I was in a new world. I
 had heard that the ocean was beautiful,
 but I had never experienced it. The
 waves were crashing against the shore,
 and the sun was shining brightly. I
 felt like I was in a new world. I
 had heard that the ocean was beautiful,
 but I had never experienced it. The
 waves were crashing against the shore,
 and the sun was shining brightly. I
 felt like I was in a new world.

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The first of these is the fact that the
 system is not a simple one. It is a
 complex one, and it is not possible to
 describe it in a few words. It is a
 system of many parts, and it is not
 possible to describe it in a few words.

“ Here Alexander his proud flag unfurl’d 1395

“ In dreary deserts to subdue the world.

“ Look farther on, beyond that eastern bound,

“ Where man imagines no more land is found.

“ There fields, and cities, groves, and rivers fair,

“ Disclose a country which deserves thy care. 1400

“ No records yet its future name have shown,

“ To Rome and Greece it stands alike unknown ;

“ Unborn historians shall preserve its fame,

“ And tell mankind that China is its name. 1404

“ In this new world unnumber’d millions swarm,

“ To peace devoted and averse to harm.

“ That stream which laves the grand pagoda’s walls,

“ And thence in two divided portions falls;—

“ That bridge stupendous which sublimely stands;—

“ That wall which stretches into distant lands,

“ Unconquer’d Magog’s wand’ers to restrain, 1411

“ Whose bold irruptions prove it built in vain ;—

L. 1402. *To Rome and Greece it stands alike unknown.*] That the Romans had no knowledge of this country, I think, all grant ; and our modern geographers believe that Ptolemy knew it little better ; for though he talks of Sinarum regio, yet by his description it should be rather Siam than China.

L. 1411. *Unconquer’d Magog’s wand’ers to restrain.*] The Scythians, or Tartars, bridled by the wall of China.

“ These works prodigious, and superb design,
“ Are human efforts, though they seem divine.
“ A prince at present fills this mighty throne 1415
“ With views of empire placid as thine own ;
“ But could he thy superior virtues see,
“ His humbled soul would yield the crown to thee,
“ With calm submission own thy sovereign sway,
“ And feel less joy to govern than obey. 1420

“ But though these realms bestow a boundless
store,
“ Another prospect will present thee more.
“ Another world, and worlds of treasure, sleep
“ Beyond the confines of the western deep :
“ The fairest country which the sun surveys, 1425
“ Or deigns to visit with his genial rays.
“ Its vast extent engrosses every zone,
“ And calls the beauties of the world its own :
“ To learn the path, behold that northern waste,
“ And watch those crowds that through the desert
haste ; 1430

L. 1415. *A prince at present fills this mighty throne.*] As Augustus reign'd at Rome, and the temple of Janus was shut, when our Saviour was born ; so it is remarkable, that in China all things were quiet, and the emperor changed his own name for another that signifies pacific.

“ See that small strait with timbers cover’d o’er,
“ See how they swarm to reach the happy shore !
“ See with what safety they forsake the strand,
“ Cross the wild gut, and reach their destin’d land !
“ Were both compar’d, thy justice must confess,
“ Canaan to this is but a wilderness. 1436
“ In this wide region reigns eternal spring,
“ And smiling summer hovers on the wing.
“ Here beauties bloom to human eyes unseen,
“ The flowers are fresh, the trees are ever green :
“ Delicious fruits the fragrant boughs support,
“ And nature seems to vegetate in sport. 1442
“ Creation smiles ! birds, beasts, and insects play,
“ And dance refulgent in the beams of day.
“ The tract so boundless and the scene so vast,
“ That crowds of empires are absorb’d and lost.

“ ’Twas for thy sake I sent those myriads o’er,
“ Who lately press’d the continental shore;
“ To thee this world of glory to convey,
“ Where thou shalt hold an undisputed sway: 1450
“ This promis’d land without reward I give,
“ Where all the millions of the earth may live.

L. 1431. *See that small strait with timbers cover’d o’er.]*
The straits of Anian.

“ And all the tribute which my lips demand
“ For this dominion over sea and land,—
“ For rights conferr’d, for favours freely lent, 1455
“ Is only honour and acknowledgment.
“ Nor canst thou doubt my title to bestow
“ Those varied blessings I presume to show :
“ Prince of the air thy Father Satan made, 1459
“ And storms and spirits have my voice obey’d ;
“ God of this world by Deity I’m styl’d,
“ And like a God am placable and mild.
“ Yet this is all that for the globe I ask,
“ Which those who love me own an easy task.
“ Take then these worlds, and raise thy mighty
 throne, 1465
“ And be a rival to thyself alone.
“ This, only this, shall the condition be,
“ Accept the blessing on thy bended knee.”

“ Thus far the Saviour the temptation bore,
But would not hear the black blasphemer more.
Some sacred rays of light celestial shone, 1471
Which Satan felt, and heav’d an inward groan.
Before their force the bold enchantment broke;
But ere they parted, thus the Saviour spoke :

“ Long have I borne thy insolence of power, 1475

“ Diversely shewn while waiting to devour—

“ With patience borne the arrogance and wrong

“ Which thou hast dropp’d from thy blaspheming
tongue—

“ Heard all thy falsehoods—trac’d each vain
pretence,

“ And now command thee—*Disappear from hence.*

“ The sacred writings, which our rule we make, 1481

“ Restrict that worship thou hast aim’d to take,

“ And in plain language name the Sov’reign Lord

“ To be alone in heaven and earth ador’d :

“ And those who love him must his word observe,

“ Since him alone must every creature serve.

“ Know then, that God, who scorns thy proud disdain,

“ Condemns blasphemers to eternal pain.”

“ Convuls’d with rage the prince of darkness fell,

And felt on earth the agonies of hell ; 1490

Nor could his soul these keen repulses bear,

His short-liv’d world dissolv’d in liquid air.

In horrid sounds he gave some curses vent,

And with his howlings shook the firmament :

Then to the desert hasten’d to retire, 1495

Borne on a dusky cloud of sulphur, smoke, and fire.’

CONTENTS

OF THE

FOURTH BOOK.

OUR Saviour having now foiled the enemy, the angels, who had all the time hovered over and been spectators of the combat, descend with a banquet, and sing a song of triumph on his victory; which ended, they attend him back to Jordan. The Baptist's further testimony concerning him. Our Lord, departing thence, enters on his ministerial office; and, ascending the Mount of the Beatitudes, chooses his twelve apostles, and then preaches that celebrated sermon, containing the chief heads of religion. This he begins with an inquiry after happiness: after which he gives the substance of the Ten Commandments; assuring his auditors that he came not to destroy, but to fulfil them; and instructs in almsgiving, fasting, prayer, and other duties, giving them a particular form to assist their devotion; and concludes his discourse with a lively parable of two houses, one built on the rock, the other on the sand. The sermon finished, our Lord descends from the mountain, and preaches in Galilee; working his first miracle at Cana; and at Naim, not far from it, restoring the

Widow's Son to life. In the meanwhile the Baptist continued preaching repentance, and acquiring great veneration among the people, and even from Herod himself, at that time Tetrarch of Galilee; who reforms from all his outward vices, except his unlawful love to Herodias. Herod's criminal familiarity with her becomes public; which John the Baptist hearing of, he comes to court, and boldly reproves the king: at which Herodias being enraged, she gets him imprisoned in Macherus, and some time after beheaded; he having first prophesied of the invasion of Galilee, and the discomfiture of Herod's army; which soon after came to pass. Aretas, the King of Arabia, being enraged at the injury done to his daughter, whom Herod had formerly married, enters his country with an army, which Herod prepares to encounter; but his forces forsake him, and he loses the day. On this our Saviour retires, with his disciples, into the deserts of Bethsaida.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK IV.

"THE conscious seaman, when the tempest
blows,

Feels all the horrors of surrounding woes;
But when some harbour shields him from the blast,
He grows forgetful of the dangers past:
He sees the surges, when the storm is o'er,
Subside in peace, and kiss the broken shore.
The tranquil world his eyes with joy behold,
While hills and forests flame with heavenly gold;
The face of nature looks serenely fair,
Nor storms nor vapours agitate the air; 10
The warring elements repose in peace,
And all the remnants of their discord cease;
Earth, air, and seas, assume a diff'rent dress,
And, cloth'd in smiles, their gratitude express.

Thus seem'd the Saviour, from whose love to man
These dreadful conflicts with the fiends began ; 16
From vanquish'd hell with majesty he rose,
And when he pleas'd shook off th' infernal foes ;
Whose furious powers the fruitless onset made,
Ere they retir'd to hide their shame in shade. 20

“ The fiends remov'd, celestial guards appear
With songs triumphant in the yielding air ;
Around their Lord these heavenly hosts descend,
Arm'd with that power he bade them to suspend.
These, hovering near, the night in vigils spent, 25
Saw each assault, and watch'd the great event.
Nor did these bands as mere spectators stay,
To mark the issue of the awful day ;
The legions stood in glittering arms array'd, 29
Each pois'd his spear, or grasp'd his shining blade.
They saw with joy the God in vain assail'd,
But gaz'd astonish'd when the Man prevail'd.
Yet when they saw the fiend the Saviour bear
In his dire talons through the yielding air,
They grew indignant, and could scarcely keep 33
Those bolts which hurl'd the rebels to the deep.
The angry lightnings then with fierceness shone,
And leagued with thunder trembled to be gone ;

And all their valour shewn in worlds above,
Display'd impatience through excess of love. 40
Thus angels offer'd their officious aid
To him by whom both earth and seas were made;
But not beyond their bounds they durst proceed,
Nor did our Lord their offer'd kindness need. 44
Yet soon he call'd them, when the war had pass'd,
To share his triumphs and provide a feast.

“ The signal made, these sacred legions fly
From east to west along the trackless sky,
Ambrosial food before the Saviour laid,
And mystic wine from grapes of Eden made— 50
Dainties which none but angel natures know,
Or saints enjoy when sanctified below.
They leave no dregs, no sensual passions raise,
Nor mock the taste with unsubstantial joys;
But hope, and peace, and heavenly love inspire, 55
And warm the spirit with immortal fire.

“ While some the banquet for our Lord prepar'd,
Others advanc'd, and form'd his shining guard;
Some press'd the ground, in air some hovering
hung,
And his great plaudits in these numbers sung : 60

“ Hail, Son of God, announc’d, confess’d,
 approv’d ;

“ Saviour of man, and head of angels, hail !

“ Thee thus ador’d we sing ; thus cast our crowns

“ With trembling awe at thy triumphant feet.

“ Before these worlds, thou from the mount of
 God, 65

“ When Lucifer had half dispeopled heaven,

“ Led’st forth th’ embattled seraphim to fight :

“ Then, at the head of his rebellious war,

“ Didst seize th’ arch-traitor, all his bands disperse,

“ And crush them underneath thy flaming wheels.

“ We saw them from the battlements of heaven 71

“ Tumbled abruptly down ; and chaos wide,

“ Struck with a dreadful flash of unknown light,

“ Shrink back his sooty waves, and inward roll

“ To find a new abyss ; till wheeling down, 75

“ Like falling stars, these exil’d sons of heaven

L. 61. *Hail, Son of God, announc’d, confess’d, approv’d.*]

I was so well pleased with the song of the angels in Milton, on the same occasion, that I had a desire to try what I could do in that sort of verse ; though I have but one precedent for introducing blank verse into a Poem composed of Rhimes, and that is in the Essay upon Translations, written by a person of quality in our own language: how I have succeeded in it, must be left to the reader.

“ On its black bosom hiss’d, thick sprinkled o’er
“ With scatter’d ’rops of hot sulphureous flame.

“ Thy foes confia’d, Thou, O Eternal Word,
“ Didst will creation from the dreary void, 80
“ High hills, rich dales, sweet springs, sea, earth,
and sky,

“ And those ethereal lamps which flame above
“ To light the Lord of the creation, Man,
“ The last and best display of power divine.
“ His godlike form thou didst with soul inspire,
Fitted to know and love thee ; and, design’d 86
To fill those seats th’ apostate spirits lost,
Didst place him in a paradise below. 88

The fiend in the prophetic glass beheld ;
And gnash’d his teeth with rage and rancour fell,
That earth-born man should rule so fair a world ;
Then struggling hard, burst from confinement free,
And rose through chaos and the frighted deep,
Bent on an expedition to explore

His rival’s force, then grapple and subdue, 95
And captive drag him to eternal night.

His fatal guile prevail’d ; nor could weak man
The woman and the fiend, when leagued, resist.

“ He ate ; he fell ; the whole creation groan’d,
“ And sympathiz’d in their lost master’s fate. 100
“ We sighing saw the ruins of the world :
“ So wide the breach we knew no remedy ;
“ Nor could our wisdom any means invent
“ To expiate thy injur’d Father’s wrath,
“ Punish the rebel, and lost man restore. 105
“ Then in the council of th’ Eternal Three,
“ Thou didst stand forth and seize the mighty task,
“ The weight of Heavenly vengeance deign to bear,
“ Which feeble mortals would have crush’d to hell.
“ The old red dragon met, O spotless Lamb, 110
“ By thy unequal arms is doom’d to fall,
“ Though thou no thunder in the fight wilt use,
“ Nor aught but innocence and virtue pure.
“ Thou, the chaste woman’s Seed, of virgin born,
“ The mighty serpent’s vainly threatening head 115
“ Shalt crush beyond retrieve ; while, full of rage,
“ From his wide mouth, that open sepulchre,
“ In horrid streams the yellow venom flows.
“ In folds voluminous outstretch’d he lies,
“ The wonder and the burden of the earth. 120
“ Hell’s principality thou shalt destroy,

L. 121. *Hell’s principality thou shalt destroy.*] So Mr. Mede interprets the Seed of the Woman’s bruising the ser-

“ And stol’n dominion here ; while thunder-struck,
“ And headlong hurl’d, the grinning fiends forsake
“ Their temples and fallacious oracles. 124
“ What though their malice, desp’rate, may prevail,
“ Permitted, o’er thy frail humanity ?
“ The God in safety smiles at their weak rage
“ While they dishonour and confusion gain.
“ Hell’s masterpiece, is, ill from good to draw ;
“ The art of Heaven, good from the worst of ill.
“ Thy death, the life of man, a ransom pays 131
“ To thy just Father for a ruin’d world.
“ Thou from his bosom didst in mortal clay
“ Come, first t’ instruct and then to save mankind.
“ Thy triumphs here begin, as Son of man ! 135
“ The tempter, foil’d with all his boasted arts,
“ No frail uxorious Adam found in thee,
“ Nor vain consenting Eve ! Salvation, power,
“ And strength, and might, and thanks, and praise,
and love,

ent’s head ; where he adds a pretty observation of a certain author, that there is not only a certain impression of fear on the serpent at the sight of a man, which makes him run away, unless forced to fight for his life, which he does with a particular care of his head ; but what is more remarkable, that a naked man frightens him much more than one that is clothed.

“ We thus ascribe to thee, O spotless Lamb !

“ Thus Hallelujah, Hallelujah sing.” 141

“ They, ending here, their Lord triumphant bore
To Jordan’s banks, where John baptiz’d before.

The Baptist here his wonted task pursued ;

And all the threat’nings of the law renew’d : 145

The weeping crowds his artless doctrine wins,

Who penitently now confess their sins.

These (when obedient to the will of Heaven
Christ had submitted to the mandate given)

Had mark’d the oral evidence bestow’d, 150

And with their voices hail’d him, Son of God.

But when he disappear’d, in grief they mourn’d,

Nor tasted joy till he again return’d.

But now each face, which painful sadness wore,

Put on those smiles which they assum’d before. 155

“ Soon as he came, his Lord the Baptist spied ;
Then with a shout—“ ’Tis he !” in raptures cried,

“ See, Israel, see the Lamb of God, design’d

“ To purge thy sins, and those of lost mankind.

“ Him his great Father through the clouds confess’d :

“ The mystic Dove these eyes and yours attest.

“ Yet God his worthless servant did prefer, 162

“ Ere his approach, to be his harbinger ;

" That Abraham's sons might with due honours
meet 164

" Their heavenly King, and bow to kiss his feet.

" Should our bold thoughts creation's birth explore,

" This Prince did reign eternally before:

" And live he must when I to dust descend,

" His growing kingdom can sustain no end ;

" His powerful voice shall speak when mine shall
sleep, 170

" And wake the guilty from their graves to weep."

" John having paus'd, our Lord again withdrew,

Attended closely by a chosen few,

Who learn'd from him what methods to employ,

To teach mankind the road to endless joy. 175

From envy free, more rivals they desir'd,

To praise their Lord, and make him more admir'd.

They first through Galilee proclaim'd his name,

While crowds augmented as they heard his fame.

The gathering thousands swarm from far and near,

Block round his standard, and with pleasure hear :

For every ill a remedy they find, 182

For age, and sex, for body, and for mind.

“ There is a hill from whence, when looking down,
 We see Tiberias and Bethsaida’s town. 185
 Upon its top the Saviour first appear’d,
 And in plain terms his Father’s will declar’d :
 On its broad summit he explain’d the law ;
 And all who heard, impress’d with solemn awe.
 The crowds who gather’d, fill’d an ample field, 190
 Whose souls, awaken’d, to his doctrines yield.
 From these, twelve plain, but honest men, he draws,
 To teach mankind his gospel and his laws :
 The learn’d and noble he refus’d to take, 194
 But chose poor fishers from the neighbouring lake ;

L. 184. *There is a hill from whence, when looking down,
 We see Tiberias and Bethsaida’s town.*] Some place the
 Mount of the Beatitudes between Tiberias and Bethsaida ;
 others east of Bethsaida, nearer Capernaum. Tradition
 agrees with the former opinion ; the people of the country
 shewing to this day a little hill thereabouts, which they call
Our Lord’s Table; and which the Pilgrim, who saw it, says,
 is neither very large nor very high : and this opinion I
 choose to follow.

L. 194. *The learn’d and noble he refus’d to take.*] Un-
 doubtedly our Saviour might have chosen his apostles from
 learned men ; but he had great and wise ends to the con-
 trary ; namely, to humble the pride of man, and convince
 him, that neither birth, learning, nor any other external
 advantage, is so acceptable to him as holiness and virtue ;
 and besides, to obviate such objections as he well know

Men who their lives in honest virtue spent,
 To toil inur'd, with Providence content ;
 That all might learn, the gifts which he bestow'd
 Sprang not from men, but from their fountain, God.

“ Barjona first was eager to engage, 200
 The first in zeal, in vigour, and in age.
 Firm as a rock, he boldly Christ confess'd ;
 Thence Cephas nam'd by him who knew him best.
 His brother Andrew next, of spotless fame,
 Who from Bethsaida's lovely village came. 205
 Philip was next, who did Nathanael call,
 Whose little story is well known to all.
 Then Matthew freely did the world forsake,
 And left its riches for his Master's sake.

would, in after ages, be made against his religion; since it was an impossible thing for such simple and illiterate men as his apostles, to compose so excellent a system both of speculative and moral truths; nor could they have them any where but from Heaven.

L. 206. *Philip was next, who did Nathanael call.*] It is generally thought that Bartholomew and Nathanael were the same. There is little to be said for it, and nothing against it. However, Nathanael has the more poetic sound, for which reason I have rather chosen it.

L. 208. *Then Matthew freely did the world forsake.*] Levi and Matthew are generally thought to have been the same person.

Matthew was follow'd by the lesser James, 210
 Who with our Lord exalted kindred claims.
 With him from Cana Simon also came,
 And Jude his brother—each well known to fame.
 These three to Cleopas did Mary bear;
 Judas came next, our hapless treasurer. 215
 Thomas was chosen, though but half a birth,
 To spread salvation through the listening earth.
 Then we, who speak to you, obtain'd the grace
 To close the lists of this exalted race.
 No base ambition taught us to aspire; 220
 Our conscious vileness check'd that bold desire.

“ This having done, he all those laws reveal'd
 Which from the wise and prudent are conceal'd.
 What truths sublime did our great Master teach,
 Above the arts of eloquence to reach! 225
 He claims the foremost rank in our esteem;—
 No man e'er spoke, or ever liv'd like him.
 No artful sorceries of words he tried,
 Of Roman sophistry, or Grecian pride;—

L. 210, &c. *The lesser James,—Who with our Lord ex-
 alted kindred claims.*] He is called James the Less, as is
 conjectured, from his stature; and the brother of our Lord,
 Gal. i. 19. because his kinsman, after the Jewish idiom.

Courted the mean, before the haughty bow'd, 230
 Or stole applauses from the thoughtless crowd.
 Truths from his lips with strong persuasion shone,
 Sanction'd by power divine, and yet his own.
 They prob'd the heart where'er their influence came,
 And warm'd the bosom with celestial flame. 235
 Hear then a part of truths which Christ express'd,
 And from these specimens infer the rest.

OUR SAVIOUR'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT,
 MATT. v. &c.

I.

" Misguided men ! too justly you complain,
 " Your search for happiness is made in vain :

L. 236. *Hear then a part of truths which Christ express'd.* I cannot say, that I have wrought in every particular passage of this most excellent sermon, as it is left us entire in the fifth, sixth, and seventh of St. Matthew, and in some fragments in other of the Evangelists, being a complete summary of our Saviour's law, at least, as far as it relates to practical truths. But I think I have not omitted many things remarkable in my Paraphrase upon it ; endeavouring to give, as nearly as possible, the utmost and largest import of every expression in the particular Beatitudes ; under each of which I have ranked what seemed reducible to it in the following verses and chapters, adding the contrary woes from St. Luke's Gospel.

L. 239. *Your search for happiness is made in vain.* Happiness consists solely in the enjoyment of God. God

“ For what you clasp is not less false than fair ;
 “ It tempts and cheats you with delusive air. 241

“ There are who fancy they on bliss lay hold,
 “ When their strong chests are fill’d with Ophir’s
 gold ; 243

“ They gaze with rapture on the glittering ore,
 “ And think their bliss increases with their store.
 “ These drossy minds are mix’d with more alloy
 “ Than taints that wealth they struggle to enjoy ;
 “ For while they trust to substances so frail,
 “ Which rust may injure, thieves break through
 and steal,—
 “ Which hills may bury, accidents annoy, 250
 “ Earthquakes demolish, raging fires destroy ;
 “ They make that happiness they deem’d so sure,
 “ Doubtful, uncertain, fragile, insecure.

“ True bliss exists, in this precarious state,
 “ Beyond the reach of accidents or fate : 255
 “ Though sought in vain, ’tis always in your power,
 “ And scorns the influence of a luckless hour ;
 “ Its lovely form is for itself desir’d,
 “ As gold by misers is as gold admir’d.

did not rest till he made man ; and man cannot rest till he enjoys God. All the divine tempers here recommended and enforced, are to qualify us for this happiness.

“ But gold, confin’d to earth’s polluted shore, 260

“ Clogs the bold spirit that attempts to soar.

“ The ease and pleasure which its vassals find,

“ Sport with their pride, and sensualize the mind ;

“ And when they leave that wealth of which they
boast,

“ It casts them naked on an unknown coast. 265

“ Terrestrial pleasures therefore cannot be

“ The solid basis of felicity.

“ Meanwhile that bliss, the way to which I teach,

“ Which neither fate nor accidents can reach,

“ Warms those who hold it in life’s varying stage,

“ By climes uninjur’d, unimpair’d by age : 271

“ And when that hour arrives which seals their
doom,

“ It comes with joy, and bliss survives the tomb,—

“ Shines more resplendent than the solar ray, 274

“ And beams with beauty through eternal day.

“ Eternal woes are both remote and near

“ To such as only lay up treasures here.

“ Substantial bliss is sooner found by them

“ Whom for their poverty the world condemn ;—

“ Who, when their conscience and my honour call,

“ Learn to despise them, and abandon all. 281

“ Who use the gifts which Providence affords,
“ As faithful stewards, not as wasteful lords—
“ These, rich in faith, to heaven their footsteps bend,
“ And claim a kingdom which shall never end.

II.

“ Unwary youth, in quest of vain delight, 286
“ Drive heedless on, and seldom choose aright ;
“ The glittering phantoms flatter to betray,
“ And urge them headlong on their fatal way.
“ These by their furious appetites are driven 290
“ To disregard the various calls of heaven :—
“ To seek those woes the fallen angels share,—
“ To grope for happiness, and find despair.
“ Can then precarious and uncertain joys,
“ Which prey on vice, which serious thought
 destroys—— 295
“ Which soon expire—can these the sources be
“ Of godlike man’s supreme felicity ?
“ Presumptuous youth ! ah, whither wilt thou run !
“ Why travel hard to prove thyself undone ?
“ Suspend thy madness, and at last return, 300
“ And view the causes which thou hast to mourn.
“ Who mourns his sins, while future moments last,
“ Improves the present, and redeems the past :

“ How chang’d from those, whom with new eyes
they see

“ Consume their days in thoughtless jollity ! 305

“ These must in flames lament :—while such as here

“ Bedew their cheeks with a repentant tear ;—

“ Whose pensive bosoms heave with pious sighs,—

“ Whose thoughts weigh anchor and explore the
skies,— 309

“ Who pant for him who, though unseen, they love,

“ And seek for happiness in things above—

“ Shall find their toils in Abraham’s bosom cease,

“ And rest for ever in eternal peace.

III.

“ With vain attempts some aim their names to
raise,

“ And madly hunt for undeserved praise ; 315

“ Their reeking swords they bathe in human blood,

“ And dive for honour in the streams they shed ;

“ Unhinge the world, and boast their trophies won,

“ From nations vanquish’d, and from realms undone.

“ Alas ! such glories float on fleeting breath, 320

“ And rarely live beyond the hero’s death :

“ The gaudy nothing soon as hatch’d is flown,

“ And, lodg’d with others, is no more our own.

“ He then who here his happiness would find,
“ Grasps at a phantom, and will prove it wind.

“ True magnanimity my laws impart, 326
“ But fix it in a meek and lowly heart,
“ Which lies so low has no rough storms to fear,
“ But can unmov’d the rolling thunders hear.

“ Soft is the texture of a humble mind, 330
“ Where wrongs may strike, but not an entrance
find;

“ Which bears unmov’d the insults of the throng,
“ The shafts of spite, and slander’s foulest tongue.

“ When you are injur’d, base returns decline, 334
“ Repress your wrath; the vengeful rod is mine.

“ False is that liberty, which leaves you free
“ To love your friend and hate your enemy.

“ My followers must to nobler views aspire;
“ My grace exalts the human nature higher.

“ If then you would my genuine servants prove, 340
“ Bless those who curse; and such as hate you, love.

L. 334. *When you are injur’d, base returns decline.*] An elevation of the Christian doctrine, as Dr. Hammond observes, infinitely beyond the Heathen Theology. Homer, their greatest man, introduces his imaginary goddess of wisdom, encouraging Achilles to rail heartily at Agamemnon, though he was not to strike him.

“ Pray for their lives who scarcely let you live ;
“ And as forgiveness moves your hopes, forgive.
“ These godlike deeds will make your virtues shine,
“ And look like his whose works are all divine ;
“ Whose fruitful rains and quickening sunbeams fall
“ On those who hear him, or reject his call. 347
“ Exalted thus, my faithful friends shall rise
“ In holiness like him who built the skies.
“ Thus shall true meekness lasting conquests gain,
“ And o'er the nations in full triumph reign. 351

IV.

“ How few we find, who true attachment show
“ To aught but vain and fading goods below !
“ For ease and wealth ambitious man contends,
“ Nor turns his thoughts to bliss which never ends.
“ He climbs the steep with unremitting pain, 356
“ Nor thinks a grave must bound his utmost gain.
“ Success with some will their bold efforts crown ;
“ These seize the world, and call its joys their own:
“ Their benefactor such refuse to know, 360
“ And on his bounties press to endless woe ;
“ To smiles or terrors these disdain to yield,
“ And hold their hearts against conviction steel'd.

“ High fed and wanton, pride assumes the rein,
“ And leads its victims through false joys to pain:
“ Thus doubly blinded they neglect the poor, 366
“ While Lazarus starves, or begs from door to door.
“ But soon the day which retributes will come,
“ When these shall sink to meet their final doom,
“ And, bound in flames, solicit, but in vain, 370
“ One drop of water to assuage their pain :
“ While Lazarus, us’d to suffer and obey,
“ Shall shine with glory in unclouded day.

“ Thrice happy they, for they alone are mine,
“ Who thirst and hunger after food divine ; 375
“ Whose heavenly thoughts sweet meditations fill,—
“ Who nobly aim to do my Father will :
“ These live by faith, and firmly can repose
“ On him who all their wants and sorrows knows.
“ For truth and virtue be your cares express’d, 380
“ Nor doubt that Heaven will answer for the rest.
“ Why are your thoughts with anxious fears dismay’d?
“ God wants not love nor power to give you aid.
“ Who gives the greater, will the less provide,
“ Nor food withhold, since life is not denied. 385
“ Behold the feather’d nations of the air,
“ Array’d in plumage exquisitely fair ;

“ Devoid of thought they warble forth their notes,
“ And tune his praise with their melodious throats ;
“ They neither sow, nor reap, nor plant, nor plough,
“ Yet find a feast on each luxuriant bough. 391
“ Then, shall not God, who feed each beast and bird,
“ Provide more amply for Creation's Lord ?
“ Your anxious carkings agitate the mind,
“ And drive that comfort men expect to find. 395
“ Fear not for raiment, though compell'd to go
“ Beneath your rank, undignified and low ;
“ Nothing but vice should give you cause to grieve,
“ Or fill your bosoms with regret to live.
“ For honest poverty, though not your choice, 400
“ When sent by Heaven, demands a grateful voice.
“ Behold these lilies, which unheeded grow,
“ And spread their beauties in the vale below ;
“ Such are their robes, extracted from the soil,
“ For which they weave not, neither spin nor toil;
“ That David's son, though richly cover'd o'er 406
“ With gold and purple from Sidonia's shore,
“ In borrow'd glories had but meanly shone,
“ Compar'd with these which humbly boast their own.
“ He then whose hand the fading herb supplies,
“ Which lives this moment, but to-morrow dies, 411

- “ With food and raiment will much more provide
“ For all *their* wants who take him for their guide.

V.

- “ Revenge and war the guilty world divide,
“ Injustice, rapine, cruelty, and pride. 415
“ That man is bless'd, who, full of love, bestows
“ On all mankind that mercy which he knows ;
“ Who feels for others, and their wants relieves,
“ And like a God their injuries forgives ;— 419
“ With rigour judges when his deeds he weighs,
“ And those of others candidly surveys :
“ Not born to cater for himself alone,
“ He nobly makes another's case his own :—
“ *In this just mirror all thy actions see,*
“ *And do by all, as all should do by thee.* 425

VI.

- “ Vain are those arts which foolish men devise,
“ To cover truth with sophistry and lies !
“ Traditions teach you, that your bodies pure
“ Preserve your minds from stains of sin secure.
“ Whatever vain pretences these invent, 430
“ I ask the heart, nor am with less content:

“ This purg’d from sin, and fill’d with heavenly love,
“ Becomes a temple for the mystic Dove,
“ Whose sacred feet disdain to take their rest
“ On the base soil of a polluted breast. 435
“ Your hands, and eyes, and hearts, must all be free
“ From lustful fires and foul adultery.
“ The hand, if guilty, and the wandering eye,
“ Must be remov’d, or all the parts will die. 439
“ Each secret glance which glows with lawless fires,
“ Lights in the soul a train of loose desires ;
“ While every touch of a forbidden hand
“ Breaks and opposes the divine command. 443
“ Vain are your hopes, if these you nurse, to hide
“ Effects from God, in their dark causes spied ;
“ Whose eyes at once through worlds unnumber’d
roll,
“ And mark the workings of the human soul.
“ Better, than lose that bliss the righteous find,
“ To enter life though only lame or blind.
“ Rather than sin, your appetites deny, 450
“ And die like martyrs for true chastity,
“ Through faith repelling every poisonous dart,
“ For those are glorious who are pure in heart.
“ Who nobly thus their mental powers employ,
“ Shall share those triumphs angels now enjoy,—

“ Triumphs, which here shall on their bosoms
shine,— 456

“ Prepare their souls for happiness divine,—

“ Exalt their spirits to the realms above,

“ And crown them there with everlasting love.

VII.

“ What swarms we see displeas'd with common
fame, 460

“ All eager hunting for a sounding name.

L. 460. *What swarms we see displeas'd with common fame,*

All eager hunting for a sounding name.] The seventh

Beatitude is, blessed are the peacemakers; “which is placed,” says one, “in the zeal on all occasions of making and preserving peace.” First, negotiating the peace of a men with God, which was the Apostle’s employment. And secondly, procuring by all means the peace of men among themselves: for this reason, putting up affronts, and suffering injuries. This character and employment should without doubt, belong eminently to the governors and ministers of the church, who ought especially to be the *φωστῆρες*, the light of the world, and salt of the earth, and to teach men to keep God’s commandments; but this not excluding private christians. The reward of these peacemakers is, they shall be called (shall be) the Sons of God like to God, says Hammond, as children to a parent; being already, as the apostle says, partakers of the divine nature true Heroes, or Sons of God; which title was vainly affected by the great men among the heathen, and sought, not by peace, but by war and bloodshed.

These proudly bid triumphal arches rise,
And rear the column to assail the skies.
Vile apotheosis!—these gods must die, 464
And some for crimes in endless torments lie.
Thrice happy they, who peaceful triumphs gain,
Who raise an empire in themselves, and reign;
Who find employment in this mortal state
To preach my laws, and give them all their
weight,—— 469
Who gospel truths among mankind disperse,
And bear these tidings round the universe.
If all would practise what these men advise,
This field of blood would be a paradise.
But ere the world beholds this happy state, 474
My faithful friends must meet a heavier fate:
The truths they teach will raise a host of foes
To thwart their views and harass their repose;
Murder and blood my injur'd saints will stain,
And devastations desolate the plain.
Hell-born ambition will invade the skies, 480
And pride and avarice in succession rise.
Then such as boldly for my gospel stand,
Unrighteous men with vicious names shall brand.
Who speaks of peace, to vice resigns his breath,
Or starves a martyr in the arms of death. 485

- “ Yet while enthusiasts by apostates styled,
“ And as opposers of their deeds, revil’d,
“ These saints, to whom opprobrious names are given,
“ Are own’d above as favourite sons of Heaven.

VIII.

- “ Some, from their thirst inordinate for praise,
“ Erect an idol with the name they raise ; 491
“ Their reputations from ambition form,
“ Move at her call, and round her standard swarm,
“ Should these involve you, learn from hence to
“ know,
“ The man I censure is the Saviour’s foe. 495
“ Each friend of mine must struggle to despise
“ What vain ambition teaches all to prize ;
“ Nay, when my honour calls you to the field,
“ Your reputations to reproach must yield. 499
“ What though the world its hateful malice show
“ Denounce its vengeance, and its curses throw,—
“ As false apostles stigmatize your fame,
“ And basely rob you of a virtuous name ?
“ Your time of suffering will be shortly past,
“ And you in heaven be recompens’d at last. 503
“ The day will come, when you despis’d must share
“ Those foul abuses which your Lord must bear ;

“ When you, from synagogues and councils hurl’d,
“ Shall be repuls’d as troublers of the world.
“ Then is the time your piety to show, 510
“ And do it credit wheresoe’er you go.
“ As salt to season an unwholesome race,
“ Your honour lies in combating disgrace.
“ Lights of the world you shine, that all may see
“ In your just mirror what they ought to be. 515
“ Yet, should they evil for your good return,—
“ Condemn your spirits, and your bodies burn,
“ Amidst these ills supremely bless’d ye are,
“ If, free from crimes, these woes for me you bear.
“ In patience wait, and be no longer sad, 520
“ Exult, rejoice, and be exceeding glad.
“ With joy to Heaven direct your hymns and
 prayer ;
“ A crown of glory waits your sufferings here :
“ You first immortal from the dust shall rise,
“ And nobly swell the triumphs of the skies. 525

L. 524. *You first immortal from the dust shall rise.*] It was an opinion generally received by the primitive christians, that the Martyrs, nay, the Confessors and eminent saints, should rise before the rest of the dead: whence that suffrage in their ancient Liturgies, *ut partem haberet in resurrectione primâ*, for a part in the first resurrection.

- “ But do not think, whate’er deceivers say,
 “ That Christ to heaven affords a nearer way.
 “ The truths I teach, will not repeal or break
 “ Those laws which God from Sinai deign’d to
 speak.
 “ From him I came to suffer, and fulfil, 53
 “ But not destroy, that transcript of his will.
 “ To me the types and ancient shadows tend;
 “ In me they centre, and obtain their end.
 “ Laws which of moral obligation are, 53
 “ Be it your work, your pleasure, and your care
 “ To keep secure : their force will be display’d
 “ When hoary nature shall in dust be laid;
 “ No jot or tittle of the whole shall fail,
 “ Though vice should reign or righteousness prevail
 “ In awful sounds they were to Moses given, 54
 “ Amid keen lightnings, by the voice of Heaven

L. 541. *Amid keen lightnings, by the voice of Heaven*
 The commandments were first spoken, and so are properly
 the Decalogue, or Ten Words; after which they were writ-
 ten in the two Tables, first by God, and then by Moses
 Deut. v. 22. I know not whether I ought to make an
 apology for inserting here all the commandments, which
 our Saviour does not; but considering that he mentions
 all in general, nay, several in particular here, and most of
 the rest in other places, there needs no great poetical li-
 cence for my bringing them in all together.

EXODUS, XX.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

“ Jehovah speaks, attend with love and fear,
From Egypt’s bondage sav’d—O Israel, hear:

I.

“ Let no false Gods thy love and praise divide,
Nor hope from Heav’n thy treacherous deeds
to hide. 545

II.

“ If by an image thou express thy God,
The child unborn shall feel his vengeful rod.

III.

“ Thou shalt not take thy Maker’s name in vain,
Nor sacrilegiously his rites profane.

545, &c. *Nor hope from Heav’n thy treacherous deeds*
[*de.*] Wherein I have given the sense of those words
ἐναντίον μου; or before me, in this commandment.

546. *If by an image thou express thy God,*
The child unborn shall feel his vengeful rod.] By
word image I endeavour to express the force of the He-
בְּצֶלְמָהּ and the Greek ὁμοίωμα, which are so com-
prensive, that all the image-worshippers in the world
never get clear of them; and there is no way of an-
guishing, but by setting their Index Expurgatorius to work,
blazing the word quite out of the commandment: nor
we wonder that they do so with the words of good-
ness when they began with those of God himself.

IV.

- “ Six parts of time to thee are freely given ; 55
“ The seventh is sacred, and reserv'd by Heaven

V.

- “ If long thou wishest to enjoy thy land,
“ Obey thy parents in each just command.

VI.

- “ Let not thy hand with human blood be red ;
“ For his who sheds it shall by man be shed. 55

VII.

- “ Avoid adultery as a heinous crime,
“ Nor aim thy neighbour's honour to defame.

VIII.

- “ Of deeds dishonest shun the tempting gain,
“ And earn thy bread with honest sweat and pain

IX.

- “ Bear no falsewitness, nor forswear thy word ; 56
“ Thy thoughts and deeds are naked to the Lord.

X.

- “ Thou shalt not covet what is not thine own,
“ Nor seize from others what is theirs alone.

“ Let all these laws engross your earnest care ;
“ To these add fasting, charity, and prayer. 56

But lest your fastings unsuccessful prove,
Avert no dangers, and no ills remove,
Do not like hypocrites distort your face,
Who make wry looks a mark of deepest grace;
Who in rough robes or gloomy sackcloth dress,
And mock humility in pomp express ;— 571
With whips and lances lacerate their skin,
And cherish pride to mortify their sin.
These place religion in external show,
And know most things but what they ought to
know. 575
Dispense your alms as stars shoot silent light,
Untrack'd and copious through the realms of night:
In all these actions ostentation shun,
Nor show compassion to be more undone.
They shall not pass without a due regard ; 580
God is their witness, heaven is their reward.
Discreet, yet warm and zealous, be your prayer,
And strong in faith as those of angels are :
Hence your petitions, rising in your breast, 584
In words like these should be to God express'd :

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Almighty Lord ! whose throne erected high
Is fix'd in light above the starry sky ;

- “ Let all thy works revere thy sacred name,
 “ And earth and heaven creative power proclaim
 “ Let thy dear Son his promis’d empire gain, 590
 “ And sinful nations own his sovereign reign.
 “ Let hell’s proud kingdom through the world decay
 “ And men as angels own thy righteous sway.
 “ To our frail bodies daily bread assign,
 “ And feed our souls with nourishment divine: 595
 “ O Thou, through whose redeeming love we live
 “ Forgive our sins, as debtors we forgive !
 “ Save from temptation those who trust in thee,
 “ From present ills, and future misery.
 “ Thine is the kingdom and the power divine, 600
 “ And all the glory of both worlds is thine.”

L. 590. *Let thy dear Son his promis’d empire gain.*] To explain this, take a remarkable passage out of a Latin Catechism printed here in England, in King Edward’s time for the use of the Protestants. On the explanation of this petition, “ Thy kingdom come,” (the author goes on in this manner ;) *Adhuc enim, &c.* “ For yet we see not all things put under Christ. We see not how the stone should be cut out of the mountain without hands, which broke in pieces, and reduced to nothing, the image described by Daniel: how Christ, who is the true rock, should obtain and possess the empire of the whole world, which is granted him by the Father: nor is Antichrist yet destroyed. Whence we yet desire and pray, that these things may in due time come to pass.”

“ But while to Heaven you thus devoutly pray,
Your lives must witness what your lips would
say ;——

“ Must prove the precepts which your tongues
declare,

“ And holy fruit to full perfection bear. 605

“ Should you deficient in these fruits remain,

“ Your prayers are useless, and your faith is vain ;

“ Vain your reliance on your suffering Lord,

“ And vain your knowledge of his sacred word.

“ Without repentance none can be forgiven, 610

“ Without obedience none can enter heaven.

Each light but this will like a meteor glow,

And only lead you to eternal woe.

“ Such then as truly my disciples prove, 614

Through faith, and practice, holiness, and love,

With strict propriety may be compar'd

To him, whose building on the rock is rear'd.

This, though the floods in boiling torrents rise,

To meet fierce cat'racts rushing from the skies ;

Though angry winds with maddening tempests

sweep 620

Houses and people to the foaming deep ;—

“ Shall boldly stand the elemental shock,
“ And smile securely on its native rock.
“ But such as merely hold the Christian name,
“ From baser motives, or dishonest fame ;— 625
“ Whose icy notions lead them to despise
“ Those truths which censure and condemn their
 vice,
“ May be compar’d to him, at whose command
“ The building rose upon the faithless sand :
“ See how it totters when the storm is nigh, 630
“ And inundations issue from the sky !
“ Thus while those waves which gather with the
 flood
“ Drive the loose earth on which the fabric stood,
“ The building crumbles with the mouldering shore,
“ And insulated sinks to rise no more !” 635

“ Thus having said, he ended his discourse,
While those who heard reflected on its force.
All seem’d well pleas’d and happy to attend,
Prais’d what he spoke, but mourn’d its hasty end.
He then retir’d, and, at a nuptial feast 640
Soon held in Cana, was a welcome guest.
Here condescending with his friends to dine,
He turn’d the water into luscious wine ;

And not far off, by pleasant Nain's walls,
The mournful widow's son to life recalls. 645

“ Meanwhile the Baptist did to virtue press
Those crowds who heard him in the wilderness.
Bold was his language, and his life austere;
He fear'd no mortal, and he none would spare.
Nay, life itself, his holy virtue thought, 650
Would be too dear with servile flattery bought.
Arm'd with Elijah's holy zeal and flame,
All ranks were smitten with his virtuous fame.
To his acquaintance royal names aspir'd,
To hear, not practise, virtues all admir'd. 655
Among the rest so often Herod went,
That some conceiv'd him almost penitent.
With all his vices he appear'd to part,
Except one lust, which twin'd about his heart.
He for Herodias felt a lawless flame, 660
And stain'd his crime with incest's fouler name.
Fair was this princess, beautiful and vain,
Whose lord in poor Trachonitis did reign.
The wandering Arabs, hostilely inclin'd,
Ravag'd his empire and disturb'd his mind. 665
Compell'd by these he took the bloody field,
To drive their forces which refus'd to yield.

His armed troops the Ishmaelites pursue
 Through stony plains and groves of poisonous yew ;
 But soon he hop'd to join his spouse and court, 670
 And all the fortunes of the war report.

“ While Philip, thus intent on foreign wars,
 Had left his empire and resign'd its cares,
 Herod invited fair Herodias down
 To strong Tiberias, his own stately town, 675
 Until his brother from the field return'd
 To greet his princess who his absence mourn'd.

L. 668, &c. *His armed troops the Ishmaelites pursue
 Through stony plains and groves of poisonous
 yew.*] Strabo gives an account of the wild and savage
 temper of these Itureans, calling them by no better a name
 than *κακέργες*, either Rogues or Witches, and describing
 those parts full of caves, woods, and inaccessible moun-
 tains, so infested with robbers, that the Romans were
 forced to keep constant guards there for the security of
 the country. They were, it seems, excellent archers both
 in Iturea and Trachonitis; the bows of the first being
 famous as far as Rome. And Josephus tells us, that
 Gratus the Roman General conquered the thieves that
 wasted Judæa, by the help of the bow-men of Trachonitis.
 Bell. Jud. Lib. 2. Cap. 8. He also gives a pleasant account
 of this poor Prince Philip, that he used to have his seat
 of justice carried about with him wherever he went; though
 he gives him withal such a character as he could not give
 his wealthier brother; for he says, *he was a just and honest
 man.*

“ Arriv’d, the guilty couple lost in sense
Plung’d deep in sin, and rose in impudence. 679
Their flagrant actions broke through every bound
Which love prescrib’d, or common prudence found.
Herod’s amour was public in his court,
His queen’s dejection, and his flatterers’ sport.
His lawful consort he disdain’d to own, 684
And soon repuls’d her from his bed and throne.
Long had her father fair Damascus sway’d,
And Zobah’s people his commands obey’d.
The fields of Aram, and their troops, though wild,
Had bless’d his reign and own’d him from a child.
Through Geshur’s regions fam’d for pastures green,
His power was known, and reach’d the Hagarene.

“ To him enrag’d the queen of Herod fled
Against the rival of her crown and bed ;

L. 686, &c. *Long had her father fair Damascus sway’d,
And Zobah’s people his commands obey’d.*]

One Aretas, we are sure, was King of Damascus not long after our Saviour’s time, who is mentioned in the acts of the apostles. That one of the same name (who was Herod’s father-in-law) was king of one of the Arabias, Josephus tells us ; and that his daughter fled from Herod to her father about the matter of Herodias ; for which reason the old king entered his territories, and gave him battle, wherein Herod was worsted, his army forsaking him ; which, the same author adds, the people looked on as a judgment on him for his cruelty against the Baptist.

Complain'd of both with unrelenting hate,
And urg'd her interest to procure their fate. 695
Her aged father youthful anger warms,
Who full of vengeance his Arabians arms,
And meditates a quick tremendous blow
Against his daughter's rival, lord, and foe. 699

“ Herod meanwhile, remorseless, on his throne
Kept Philip's partner, but divorc'd his own.
Through all his court those deeds contagious prov'd,
Which most in silent imitation lov'd ;
While all his parasites with flattering skill
Made vice and virtue serve their master's will. 705
At length the vices which prevail'd at court
Spread by example, sanction, and report,
Till fame convey'd them where the Baptist stood
And taught mankind by Jordan's swelling flood.

“ Inspir'd by Heaven, he hasten'd to the place
To see the king, and witness his disgrace ;— 711
To use plain speech, his conscience to alarm,
To rouse his spirit, and dispel the charm ;—
To show the bane his sycophants had brought,
And counteract the deleterious draught. 715

Towards the palace John his footsteps bent
Through prostrate crowds who hail'd him as he went.
The opening guards on his approach gave way,
Struck with an awe which border'd on dismay;
Till, every gate and antechamber pass'd, 720
He reach'd th' alcove of their deep guilt at last;
Which seem'd an harbour fitted up to please
The sons and daughters of licentious ease.
The Baptist here for no inviting stay'd, 724
He sought no favours, and no fears betray'd;
But press'd at once upon the guilty pair,
And charg'd them with reproofs they could not bear.
He found Herodias negligently dress'd,
And saw the king lean loosely on her breast; 729
Their wanton looks their guilty state proclaim'd,
And all the proofs of *damn'd* ADULTERY nam'd.

“ Fierce Herod rose at the unwonted noise,
And sternly ask'd, with a tremendous voice
And eyes all flaming—“ What intruders dare
“ Their prince's privacy destroy or share, 735
“ And rush on certain fate?”—“ Nay, rather tell,
“ How dare ye bold adulterers rush on hell?”
The Baptist firmly cries. The monarch saw
And heard the prophet with remorse and awe.

Speechless he stood ; Herodias did the same, 740
Now pale with rage, then reddening into shame.
Such is the power undaunted virtue brings
To vanquish beauty and the pride of kings.
Hard was the struggle in the royal breast,
While truth and passion each its claims express: 745
Now half averted from his tempter's eyes,
His bosom heav'd with penitential sighs ;
Now caught again in glances which he lov'd,
His weak resolves but births abortive prov'd.
The prince of hell, eternal foe to good, 750
Perceiv'd the doubts in which the monarch stood ;
Then, on his side to force him to engage,
Urg'd him with lust, and fill'd her soul with rage.
Silent he stood, while thus Herodias said,
“ Presumptuous priest, thy speech shall cost thy
head. 755
“ On Jordan's banks I hear thou cheatest well
“ The thoughtless herd with dreadful tales of hell.
“ Let servile wretches virtue's laws obey,
“ But kings to heaven can find an easier way. 759
“ Guards, take him hence, and let him learn too late,
“ Lodg'd in a dungeon, his approaching fate.”
“ The king arising, with the fair debates,
And her harsh sentence partly mitigates ;

Confirm'd that part which order'd his arrest,
But seem'd unwilling to enforce the rest ; 765
Yet bade his guards the patriarch secure,
And within strong Macherus' walls immure.
Each warrior strove to raise some just excuse
To shun an action no one durst refuse.
Some for the prisoner indirectly plead, 770
Who smiles, and bids them to the dungeon lead.
Again commanded by the tyrant, they
With much regret reluctantly obey ;
And having plac'd him in the prison, all
Retire in grief, where each his duties call. 775

“ Soon after this, the tyrant summon'd forth,
To celebrate the day which gave him birth,
His statesmen, captains, counsellors, and lords,
To taste that bounty royalty affords. 780
The rank debauch with generous wine was crown'd,
And all their reason in the flood was drown'd.
The midnight scenes concluded with a ball,
And wanton music consummated all.

L. 767. *And within strong Macherus' walls immure.*] Some say, that John the Baptist was beheaded in Macherus ; others, in Sebaste. Josephus seems to be for the former, in his Antiquities, Lib. 1. Cap. 10.

“ Among the female dancers who resort
To grace the splendours of the tyrant’s court, 785
One daughter, who, ere base Herodias fled,
Had bless’d the injur’d Philip’s nuptial bed,
Shone in the dance superior to the rest,
And gave new pleasures to the despot’s breast.
Too soon in her the world her mother spied, 790
The same fair face, and unexampled pride :
Like her, of slaves she had a mighty band,
And could, like her, smiles, tears, and oaths command;
Like her, drop poison from her eyes and tongue,
And gain attention if she danc’d or sung. 795
It chanc’d when some Arabian tune was play’d,
The youthful sorceress all her wiles display’d ;
Her feet with elegance and quickness mov’d,
And all who saw her, prais’d, admir’d, or lov’d.
The king, extravagantly pleas’d and proud, 800
Join’d the applause which burst from all the crowd,
Lengthen’d those plaudits which her ears devour,
And stood unrivall’d both in praise and power.
“ I swear by heaven’s unutter’d Name,” he cried,
“ Ask what thou wilt, it shall not be denied. 805
“ Though half my kingdom were the great demand;
“ My word is gone, and Herod’s word shall stand.”

The damsel heard, and instantly withdrew
To see what object might attract her view ;
At length, instructed by her mother, said, 810
“ Give in this charger John the Baptist’s head.”
The king exclaim’d, “ rather than that should fall,
“ Take, cruel maid, not only half, but all :
“ Take my dominions, but my word release,
“ And let the prophet end his days in peace.” 815
She, old in vice, inexorable stood,
And sternly clamour’d for the Baptist’s blood ;
Nor could persuasions turn her vile intent,
Or once avert the vengeance which she meant.
The council call’d, their suffrages divide, 820
Some took the damsel’s, some the monarch’s side :
Some from revenge against the prophet spoke ;
Through love and interest some with conscience
broke :
A generous few admitted what he said,
And thought his oath was indiscreetly made, 825
And thence unlawful. These were overborne
By greater numbers, and repell’d with scorn.
The king, uneasy, at the faction rail’d,
And saw with grief the party which prevail’d ;
At length with tears reluctantly gave way, 830
And bade his guards the damsel’s voice obey.

“ With painful search they found a hoary knave,
To take that life the monarch would not save.

He in the dungeon soon the Baptist spied, 834

And sternly said—“ For instant death provide.”

“ That work is done,” the holy prophet said,

And, smiling, offer’d to the axe his head :

“ Full well I know I am but mortal born ;

“ I came from dust, and must to dust return ;

“ The debt of nature must by all be paid, 840

“ And kings must walk through death’s impervious
shade.

“ In God’s fair cause, for injur’d truth, I die,

“ And John shall smile when those who kill him
sigh.

“ But if on life’s last verge our souls can see

“ Within the realms of dark futurity, 845

“ My guiltless blood, within this dungeon shed,

“ Will be aveng’d on guilty Herod’s head.

“ I see the Arabs from their quarters pour

“ On his domains a dusky deadly shower.

“ I see”—the ruffian will no time afford, 850

But lifts on high his unrelenting sword ;

Its quick descent an easy passage found,

And life departed through the bleeding wound.

“ His head, which ruffians to the banquet bear,
Was seiz'd with joy by false Herodias there, 855
Who, lest they should her cruelty delude,
Wip'd from his face the warm and clotted blood ;
And having view'd it, cried with savage glee,
Before the court and trembling king—“ 'Tis he.

“ Now, daring censures at a princess fling ; 860

“ Now, if thou canst, preach on and scorn a king.”

“ Short were the triumphs of this worthless guest,
And sad the tidings to conclude the feast.

In dreadful haste a messenger appear'd, 864

Whose looks betray'd the news his tongue declar'd.

His clothes were dusty,—terror and surprise

Pronounc'd a prologue in his face and eyes.

He pale and trembling through the circle springs,

And to the king these doleful tidings brings :

“ Renown'd Aretas with his hostile bands 870

“ Has gain'd a passage through Iturea's lands.

“ His troops near Cesarea Jordan pass'd,

“ And all the higher Galilee laid waste

“ With fire and sword. To them strong Abel's town

“ Its gates has open'd. Now they're marching down

L. 874.———*To them strong Abel's town.*] Abel-Bethaacha was a strong town near the north borders of Galilee, into which Sheba threw himself when pursued by David's army.

“ To Kedesh, and to lofty Ramah near, 876
“ Prepar’d to yield, all struck with panic fear.”

“ The conscious guilt which flush’d in Herod’s
eyes

Perplex’d his measures—yet “ To arms,” he cries,
“ With eager haste the bold invaders meet, 880
“ And stretch their leader at your conquering feet;
“ To his bold march present an iron shore,
“ From which his legions shall return no more.”

He then his troops from proud Sebaste draws,
And strong Macherus, which th’ Arabian awes. 885

To these he added those of Baara’s vale,
Of Carmel’s mount, and Hermon’s fruitful dale.

To join his force, his powerful treasure brings,
From Ishmael’s race, auxiliary kings.

The whole combin’d enabled him to boast, 890
Had Heaven stood still, a formidable host.

Amidst his vice the wretch to Heaven applied,
And strangely blended piety and pride;—

L. 886. *To these he added those of Baara’s vale.*] Josephus says, Herod kept a strong garrison in Macherus to bridle the Arabians; just against which was the famous valley of Baaras, for the wonders of which that historian has been so much talked of.

Ambitious offerings to the temple sent, 894
And more than all, half promis'd to repent ;—
In haste a message to the prison sends,
And John's dead body offers to his friends ;—
The mangled corpse directs them to inter,
That he with tears might bathe his sepulchre.
But these disguises all with ease perceiv'd, 900
Nor earth nor Heaven his penitence believ'd ;
Hence crown'd with curses to the field he went ;
His army fell ;—you know the sad event.

“ The death of John, and Herod's late defeat,
In Christ's disciples serious fears create. 905
The twelve with Christ in rich Capernaum lay,
And watch'd the frowns of each succeeding day ;
In tears of sorrow these the Baptist mourn'd,
Till Herod frantic to his court return'd ;
Then with their Lord they silently remov'd, 910
And in a desert sought that peace he lov'd.
This safe retreat was near Bethsaida found,
Whose sons the doctrines of the Saviour own'd.

L. 912. *This safe retreat was near Bethsaida found.]*
It is sometimes called a village, at others a town or city ;
though if only a village, large enough, according to Josephus ; who says, that every village in Galilee, even the

The sacred precepts they had heard before,
Instead of cloying, made them wish for more. 915
With his lov'd few he therefore thither went,
And in the town some peaceful moments spent ;
Spoke of events which yet' remain'd behind,
And his last efforts to redeem mankind.
Yet these at length in vice obdurate grow, 920
And with Chorazin find one common woe :—
Still harden more from numerous blessings given,
Till flagrant crimes provoke the wrath of Heaven.
But though his judgments are obscur'd by shade,
The day will come when all shall stand display'd ;
Then all the swarms of this terrene abode 926
Shall vindicate the attributes of God.

least of them, contained 15,000 inhabitants (but surely there must be some mistake in the number). This Bethsaida, he says, was for the pleasantness of it erected into a city, and called Julias ; but let it be then what it would, our Saviour's woe is now accomplished against it, and it is reduced to its first original, a lodge in the wilderness ; nothing thereof now remaining, as travellers tell us, besides seven or eight scatter'd cottages, which scarcely deserve the name of houses.

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIFTH BOOK.

THE apostle proceeds, and relates the miracle of the loaves; at which the multitude surprised, would again have forced our Saviour to accept of the kingdom; but he retires from them, and continues all night praying in one of the *Proseuchæ* or oratories of the Jews, having sent his disciples across the lake towards Capernaum; whom he overtakes, walking on the sea, before it was day. The disciples are affrighted, till, knowing his voice, St. Peter leaves the ship and goes towards him; but, when ready to sink, he is supported by our Lord; who entering the ship, they immediately land near Capernaum; to which place our Saviour goes with his disciples, being followed by the multitude more for interest than devotion. His sermon to them on that subject, and discourse concerning eating his flesh and drinking his blood; at which the Jews being offended, many of his followers forsake him; and upon his apostles' protestation of fidelity, he prophesies that one of them should betray him. He cures the son of Chuza, Herod's steward; on which Chuza himself, who had been before an

Herodian, became his disciple, with all his house. The miracle of the Centurion's servant, Simon's wife's mother, and the Paralytic, at Capernaum ; and that on blind Bartimeus, at Jericho. Our Lord, going up to Jerusalem, curses the barren fig-tree, cures one that was born blind, purges the temple of buyers and sellers the first time, and heals the infirm man at the Pool of Bethesda ; which last miracle, with some cursory remarks, concludes the fifth Book.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

B O O K V.

THUS far the fathers strict attention paid,
Nor any signs of weariness betray'd ;
Though restless Sol triumphantly had driven
His flaming coursers to the top of heaven.
Th' apostle paus'd : his hearers would not stay, 5
But urge him on, impatient of delay—
Press'd him with importunity, to tell
Christ's every word, and every miracle.

“ Our Lord,” he said, “ who sought to be
conceal'd,
By his retreat was rather more reveal'd ; 10
Just as the sun is with more eyes survey'd,
When half eclips'd he shines through dusky shade.
The place where Jesus and his twelve repos'd,
Was by some shepherds to the towns disclos'd :

Thence gathering thousands his recesses found, 15
And with his twelve encompass'd him around.
He, on an easy hillock mounted, taught
The crowds who came, and cur'd the sick they
brought :

With him the multitude unwearied stay,
Till lengthening shadows show'd declining day, 20
When his apostles anxiously desir'd
That all might go before the day retir'd ;
For in the desert, they, with hunger press'd,
And trav'ling tir'd, had neither food nor rest.

“ The Saviour, hearing, turn'd his tender eyes 25
Towards the multitude, and thus replies :

“ Shall we from Heaven benevolence receive,
“ And to our guests no kind refreshment give,
“ Who, when keen hunger and dark night oppress,
“ Might faint and perish in the wilderness ? 30

L. 26. *Towards the multitude, and thus replies.*] It is a common mode of speech, both of the evangelists and other holy writers, to introduce persons replying or answering, where there is at most only an involved question going before. So St. Matthew, xi. 25. “ Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father,” &c. though we read of no preceding question or compellation ; an usual Hebraism, as Maldonate says on the place, the word משיב signifying not only answering a question, but also beginning or continuing a speech.

“ Such blessings rather as your stores impart,

“ Let all present them with a cheerful heart.”

Philip and Andrew, hearing this, replied,

“ Whence shall we bread for such vast crowds
provide ?

“ We have two fishes which we lately took 35

“ With toilsome angling on the neighbouring brook ;

“ These and five loaves are all the stock we boast,

“ But ten times five among such crowds were lost.”

Our Lord rejoin’d—“ Proportion to your store

“ Your various gifts, and Heaven will ask no more.

“ Go then, and let the company be plac’d ; 41

“ Give what you have, and leave to me the rest.”

These powerful words with majesty he said,

And we with wonder and with faith obey’d.

Five thousand men we plac’d upon the grass, 45

But let the rest without a reckoning pass.

A hundred troops the num’rous party made,

Who for some unknown benefaction stay’d ;

Ranks crowding ranks behind each other spread,

Who all the wond’rous miracle survey’d. 50

L. 47. *A hundred troops the num’rous party made.*] St. Luke ix. 14, 15. “ Make them sit down by fifties in a company ;” a hundred of which fifties there are in five thousand.

Christ in his hands the loaves and fishes takes,
 And speaks a word, or only looks, and makes.
 His heart to Heaven in fervent prayer he rais'd,
 And his Great Father for each favour prais'd ; 54
 Then bless'd and brake.—We took the large supplies,
 But scarcely credited our hands and eyes—
 The gifts distributed among the crowd,
 Who ate, astonish'd at the boon bestow'd.
 From this small source an undiminished store
 Supplied each want, and left abundance more. 60

“ For while we gaz'd on this amazing feast,
 Our rising wonder like the loaves increas'd.
 “ Let all the fragments of the fish and bread
 “ Be gather'd up,” our Heavenly Master said.
 We rose obedient from our pleasing treat, 65
 And fill'd twelve baskets with the broken meat :

L. 66. *And fill'd twelve baskets with the broken meat.*]
 There are two different words used for what we render baskets, *Κόφιναι*, and *σπυρίδες* ; the former in the miracle of the fivethousand, the latter of the four thousand, as Grotius and others remark. These twelve baskets seem to have been the proper goods of the twelve apostles, serving them for the conveyance of fish, or as a kind of sea chests, to hold all their necessities. The *σπυρίδες*, Dr. Hammond thinks, were a larger sort of *κόφιναι*, since one of them was

These to our friends we speedily convey'd,
 Who at some distance in a vessel stay'd.
 The shouting people shook the trembling ground,
 With "Christ" and "miracle" the hills resound; 70
 In grateful songs the women spread his fame,
 And stammering babes were taught to lisp his name.

" Meanwhile the men in groups together crowd;
 Some whispering murmur'd, others spoke aloud.
 At length the whole, as from deliberate choice, 75
 In words like these proclaim'd the public voice:
 " Why should we thus the yoke of bondage wear,
 " Or Herod's tyranny or Cæsar's bear?
 " Has not kind Heaven a great Deliverer sent,
 " To cure our bodies and supply each want, 80
 " To give us life if in his cause we die,
 " And call assistance from the distant sky—
 " Greater than Moses by himself foretold,
 " And all the holy messengers of old?
 " That greatness, whence he learn'd a crown to
 scorn, 85
 " Nobly declares him for a sceptre born.

big enough to hold a man; St. Paul being let down from
 Damascus, *ἐν σπυρίδει*, in a basket, as we render it, Acts,
 ix. 25. our word not noting a limited capacity, but only
 the kind of vessel.

“ We form an army in ourselves as great
 “ As Judas had when he controll’d the state—
 “ Greater than that which brave Matthias join’d,
 “ When none but Modin’s villagers combin’d. 90
 “ Why should his bashful modesty restrain
 “ Our public suffrage, which demands his reign?
 “ His standard rais’d shall to Tiberias go;
 “ Samaria next his powerful arms shall know;
 “ At length in Solyma, when stronger grown, 95
 “ Our Prince shall mount his father David’s throne.”

“ The gath’ring faction palms and garments bring,
 And madly shouted—“ Hail, great Israel’s king!”
 Their dangerous kindness he in part suppress’d,
 And sought retirement to avoid the rest; 100
 Against a sceptre urging his defence,
 And taking measures to depart from thence.

L. 89, &c. *Greater than that which brave Matthias join’d,
 When none but Modin’s villagers combin’d.*

Josephus, Antiq. lib. 12. cap. 8. says, those who joined Matthias were no more at first than the inhabitants of the small village of Modin. And even when his son Judas came against the army of Antiochus, under Gorgias and Nicanor, consisting of forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse, he had no more than three thousand men, and those raw and badly armed. Cap. xi. of the same book.

Far more he seem'd of friends than foes afraid,
 And sought for safety in the neighbouring shade :
 Favour'd by this, and urg'd by strong desire, 105
 His burden'd spirit hasten'd to retire ;
 And in an arbour, where he often pray'd,
 Escap'd that tumult which the crowd had made.—
 Its sides were wall'd, a sure defence to yield 109
 From savage beasts which prowl by night the field.
 Our Lord alone in holy hymns and prayer
 Continued here till night began to wear ;

L. 109. *Its sides were wall'd, a sure defence to yield*] I take that passage in St. Luke, vi. 12. where it is said, that our Lord continued all night in prayer to God, ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τῷ θεῷ, to relate to the place, even more immediately than the action, according to the opinion of Drusius, Dr. Hammond, Mr. Mede, and other learned men, who think this ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ τῷ θεῷ, ought to be translated, in the Proseucha, Prayer-House, or Oratory of God ; the form of which Oratories Mr. Mede describes from Epiphanius, after whom I have copied. His conjecture he makes more probable by Philo's ἐδενδροτόμησαν, the Alexandrians cutting down the trees of the Jewish Proseuchas or Oratories : and the same is probable from that comparison of David, “ I am like a green olive-tree in the house of my God.”

L. 112. *Continued here till night began to wear.*] The τετάρτη φύλακη, or fourth watch of the night, among the Jews, was undoubtedly near day ; but the phrase ἐφίας γενομένης is here used, St. Matth. xiv. 23. “ When the

But left this sweet alcove ere dawn'd the day,
To seek his followers toiling on the sea.

“ His chosen twelve, at his supreme command,
Had left the crowd to gain Capernaum's land; 116
And in a vessel we forsook the shore,
Bethsaida's coasts, which join'd it, to explore.
The night, though flattering, prov'd at last unkind,
And left our bark expos'd to seas and wind. 120
Though toss'd with tempests, we could make no way,
When certain signals show'd approaching day ;

evening was come, he was there alone. 24. But the ship was tossed. 25. And in the fourth watch of the night,” &c. Now, the same word *ὄψια* is used, v. 15. “When it was evening.” Dr. Hammond thus reconciles these places, “that the word *ὄψια* is taken in different senses, “sometimes for the precise evening, or sun-set, at others “synecdochically for the whole night, as morning for “the day.” So in Moses, “the evening and the morning were the first day,” a natural day of twenty-four hours. Thus, in the first place, it is to be taken for the precise evening or sun-set ; in the latter, for the whole night ; to which might be added, that the second *ὄψια* may be at a great distance from *τετάρτῃ φύλακι*, see v. 23. “When the evening was come, our Saviour was alone in the mountain praying ;” which must take up some time ; as it did, we know, whole nights together : then v. 24. “The ship was in the midst of the sea ; and v. 25. In the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them,” &c.

But still our eyes could scarcely see the light,
Or find our sea-marks in the stormy night. 124
The waves seem'd angry, and our ship was toss'd,
And we half found'red gave ourselves for lost.
Our mast was broken, and our helm was gone,
And boiling surges drove the vessel on.
Enclos'd with death we thought it vain to strive,
And not one soul expected to survive. 130
But life is dear, some therefore ready stood
To seize a plank, and shun the furious flood
On boards or rafts, if they on these could stand,
And reach, though naked, the contiguous strand.
And ere we ventur'd on the awful swell, 135
Each spoke to each, and took his last farewell.

“ We scarce had ended, ere Barjona saw
A distant form which fill'd our souls with awe :
It seem'd approaching to our shatter'd bark,
But this was doubtful, for the night was dark. 140
At length we look'd : all saw it, all agreed,
Each saw the form undoubtedly proceed.
As it advanc'd, distinctly it appear'd,
And gave new terrors to the death we fear'd :
Its shape was human, walking on the sea ; 145
Each step it took created new dismay :

It seem'd to all, who gaz'd with much affright,
Some horrid spectre roving in the night :
And as it came, we plainly could perceive
It meant to board the wreck we wish'd to leave. 150
But while with horror to the stern we fled,
The strange appearance mildly spoke, and said :—
“ Courage, my friends ; assistance still is near ;
“ Behold your Lord, and give the winds your fear.”
His well-known voice with hopes and fears we
heard, 155
But scarce believ'd that help so near appear'd.

“ Cephas, with smiles, forgetting sea and shore,
Grew strong in faith, though he was weak before ;
And boldly said—“ If thou the Saviour be,
Repeat thy voice, and bid me come to thee.” 160
Again he spoke, while rapt in joy we stood,
And beckon'd Peter to attempt the flood.
He left the wreck, and trod the watery field,
Whose solid waves like rocks refus'd to yield. 164
With daring feet through unknown paths he goes,
And walk'd majestic as the surges rose.
But when he saw the surly ocean frown,
The hollow hanging waves look low'ring down ;
When in a dreadful vale, the seas and night
Conjoin'd to intercept the Saviour's sight ;— 170

The stormy winds obstruct his wonderous race,
 And dash the twisted foam against his face;—
 Surpris'd with fear, he felt the slippery wave
 Betray his feet, and cried—" O Master, save."
 HE heard and sav'd ; but did his fears upbraid, 175
 And mildly ask'd him, " why he seem'd afraid ;
 " Whence he so soon could so forgetful prove,
 " Suspect his power, or criminate his love ?"
 Our vessel then the wonderous pair receiv'd,
 And all with Cephas stedfastly believ'd; 180
 All join'd in songs the Saviour to adore,
 And soon in safety reach'd the welcome shore.

" With tranquil hearts the sounding beach we
 walk'd,
 And of our fears and recent dangers talk'd.
 While thus engag'd, the cheerful orb of day 185
 On Hermon's hill diffus'd its sacred ray.
 Our nets and clothes we then prepar'd to spread,
 To meet the sun upon a sandy bed.

L. 186. *On Hermon's hill diffus'd its sacred ray.*] Hermon was east of Jordan and the sea of Galilee, Deut, iv. 47, 48. " They possessed their land (of Sihon and Og) on this side Jordan (the wilderness' side, where this book must have been written), toward the sun-rising, from Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto Mount Sion (lxx. the Mount of Sihon), which is Hermon."

These quickly dried, we to Capernaum went, 189
 To whose fair walls his steps the Saviour bent.
 But ere we reach'd it, as we backward threw
 Our wandering eyes, the lake we left to view,
 We saw its side towards the western shore
 With men and ships completely cover'd o'er ;
 The crowds who still remain'd upon the sand 195
 With eager haste prepar'd to leave the strand ;
 To press that water their companions press'd,
 And seek the Saviour on its placid breast.
 Hence the soft surface of its native green,
 Conceal'd by vessels, scarcely could be seen. 200
 These from the shore the hardy seamen shove,
 And half the bay appear'd a floating grove.
 So when their flight a flock of locusts take
 From Lubim's wild, or Chelonidian's lake,

L. 203—206. *So when their flight a flock of locusts take
 From Lubim's wild, or Chelonidian's lake,
 While Mizraim's sons their foolish ox implore
 To drive the plague which hovers on their shore.]*

All authors who write of Africa observe, that those deserts produce vast armies of these destructive creatures. A people there called the *Ἀκριδοφάγαι*, or locust-eaters, take their names from making reprisals upon them, and devouring them, because they have left nothing else to eat. See the Scholiast or Dionysius, v. 550, 569. Diodorus, Strabo, and several of the ancients (as Ludolfus since), and others quoted by Bochart, Lib. 4. Cap. 3. give us their description

While Mizraim's sons their foolish ox implore 205
To drive the plague which hovers on their shore ;—

and history ; that learned man deriving one of the Arabian names, Alhabsan, from Abyssinia, a part of Africa, which they seldom fail to visit, being brought thither, by winds, from those vast sandy tracts of ground that lie south and west, in which are the Chelonidian fens, Chelonides Paludes in the geographer, by a continual stream discharging themselves into the Niger. Now the same south or westwinds, which brought them from the wilderness, might carry them on to Egypt ; Bochart being of opinion, that the Egyptian locusts came from this country : though I rather believe they took not so long a journey, being borne from Arabia Felix, east of Egypt ; and where enough of them are often found to supply all their neighbours ; the Arabians being but too well acquainted with them, and their writers giving a more particular description of them than any others. It may not be unpleasant to instance in one, because of his odd easterly way of expression, who complains of their molesting them at their very tables : he is quoted by Bochart, in his *Locusta*, in these words, “ Algesen, the son of
“ Aly, said, we were sitting at a table, I and my brother
“ Mahumed, the son of Alchanasia, and the sons of my
“ uncle Abdalla, and Kethem, and Alphidal, the sons of
“ Alibas, when a locust lit upon the table, in the middle
“ of us,” &c. However, though Bochart's conjecture may not here hold, because it is said that it was **רִיחַקִּים**, an east wind, that brought these locusts, for which reason they must rather come from Arabia which lies east, than Ethiopia which is south from Egypt ; yet they may be, and are frequently, carried thither from Abyssinia, by those south and west winds, which often bring them from the Cape, or the deserts of Mount Atlas. As to my expression, the plague which hovers, it is agreeable to what historians

So when the west winds from their reedy coast
 Drive off those swarms in which their hopes were
 lost,
 From their fair fields the straggling squadrons sweep,
 And hurl them headlong in th' Arabian deep;—

relate of the vast flights of these locusts, which sometimes obscure the sun, and darken large tracts of ground; two of their names, *חֶבֶל* and *צִלְצֵל*, being derived, by Bochart, from such roots as imply veiling and darkness; who further affirms out of Cadamastus, that they sometimes reach twelve miles together. And Surius says, “That even in
 “Poland, in the year 1541, a cloud of them appeared two
 “miles in length, and hindered the light of the sun from
 “all that tract of ground over which they flew.”

L. 207. *So when the west winds from their reedy coast*] Exod. x. 19. “The Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea.” I call it a reedy coast, because the sea is styled in the Hebrew, *Jam Zuph*, the reedy, sedgy, or flaggy sea; from the multitudes of flags and weeds which grow in it, as well as on its bank; “though never so many ill weeds there,” says Fuller, after his way, “as when the Egyptians were drowned in it.”

L. 210. *And hurl them headlong in th' Arabian deep.*] The Red Sea is also called by Dionysius and others *Κόλπος Ἀραβικὸς*, the Arabian gulf (now Mare de Mecca), from its washing the shores of Arabia. This is the usual end of those creatures, as Pliny, Jerome, and others, say. I will only instance in Sigebert, even in our own country, who tells us in his Chronicle, “That after a parcel of these
 “Tartarian travellers had made a straggling visit into
 “Europe, and put all France under contribution (or rather

So looks the gulf, when they a period find 211
To their long voyage, driven by the wind ;
From shore to shore their breathless millions spread,
And check the tide with ramparts of the dead :—
Thus seem'd the lake, when from the distant side
The sails were spread, and dashing oars were plied :
While they with toil the Saviour's tract pursued,
And in their minds his miracles review'd.
But when the gale began to rouse the deep,
They chang'd their course, nor took their destin'd
sweep ; 220
Their numerous vessels sought the yielding sand,
And at Capernaum they safely land.

“ Here with surprise they soon the Saviour found .
For well they knew he had not coasted round ,

“ Military execution), they were at last all carried away by a
“ blast of wind, and drowned in the British ocean, in such
“ vast numbers, that being thrown up again on the shores,
“ their putrified bodies infected the air, and brought a
“ terrible pestilence, which destroyed an incredible number
“ of men.”

L. 223. *Here with surprise they soon the Saviour found.*] They might well be surprised to find him there so soon in the morning, knowing that his disciples went away without him ; it being at least fourteen or fifteen miles from the *Mountain of Miracles* (supposing it to be south of Bethsaida, where it is generally placed) round to Capernaum ; the sea

By land or sea, Bethsaida's bending shore : 225

No boat was there ; his own had sail'd before.

Arriv'd, they ask'd him how he thither came ?

For all were anxious to enjoy his fame.

He saw what motives had become their guide,

And thus with some severity replied : 230

“ If I to gratify your pride should tell,

“ This would no more than my last miracle

“ Convince your unbelief. Too well I see

“ My loaves and fishes are preferr'd to me.

“ Unhappy men, you waste your time in vain 235

“ The fading riches of the world to gain ;

“ You madly toil for unsubstantial food,

“ And things which perish call your greatest good ;

“ Nor once attempt to taste without alloy 239

“ That meat which saints in other worlds enjoy :

“ Of these repasts my faithful friends partake,

“ Who quit your follies for your Master's sake.

being, according to Josephus, fourteen or fifteen miles long, and six or seven broad, and this voyage containing about half the length, and all the breadth of it, besides the loss of way by creeks and turnings. Both Chorazin and Capernaum now lie buried in dust and ruins : the *Pilgrim*, who saw them, tells us, that even Capernaum itself consists of nothing but three or four fishing cabins near the lake.

“ To give them life, the Son of God was given ;
 “ To purchase glory, he came down from heaven ;
 “ To prove his mission, miracles were sent ; 245
 “ To save mankind, he calls them to repent ;
 “ For none but these his blessings shall receive,
 “ Who, with that faith which works by love, believe.”

“ The thoughtless crowd, on miracles intent,
 Despis’d the ends for which these signs were sent ;
 Each felt his soul by novelty inspir’d, 251
 And all new causes of amaze desir’d.
 Some ask’d for manna, which their sires despis’d ;
 And some, demurring, gold and silver priz’d ;
 Ignobly sunk in laziness and pride, 255
 The sensual vices all his views defied.
 Each seem’d ambitious to espouse his cause,
 To raise his empire, but subvert his laws :
 And had our Lord, his auditors to win, 259
 Freed them from labour, and indulg’d their sin ;—
 Had he, their clamours and huzzas to gain,
 Taught them in shameful idleness to reign ;—

L. 253. *Some ask’d for manna, which their sires despis’d.*
 It seems, the Jews desired our Lord to give them manna,
 which they tacitly beg, St. John, vi. 31. and more plainly
 v. 34.

The mass, attentive to each word he spoke,
Had rescued Judah from her foreign yoke.

“ But Christ, who knew their motives and their
deeds, 265

From their ambition and intrigues recedes.

In all his words he recommended toil,

And nobly scorn'd to flatter or beguile ;

Nor would perform those wonders which they lov'd,

To please the vanity by which they mov'd : 270

For greatest miracles which common grow,

Lose all their force, and are no longer so.

Yet thus he spoke : “ The manna Moses brought

“ To feed your fathers for the land they sought,

“ Was not from him ; from Heav'n the gift came

down, 275

“ Its various mercies to display and crown.

“ Your sires partook of this material bread,

“ Whose mouldering ashes lie among the dead.

“ But great and numerous as these blessings were,

“ They stand eclips'd by those I now declare ; 280

“ Superior blessings Heaven designs to give,

“ And those who eat this bread of life shall live.

“ In me, behold this spiritual supply,

“ And such as come shall eat and never die.

“ But know, vain men, the bread which I bestow
“ Suits not the taste of all who dwell below. 286
“ Material food the human frame requires ;
“ The food I give the human mind inspires.
“ Who eats, renew’d with vigour all divine, 289
“ Shall do my Father’s heavenly will and mine ;
“ Shall live protected till his days are o’er,
“ And die, to hunger and to thirst no more ;
“ In life and death shall bear this constant sign,
“ By faith and holiness distinguish’d mine.

“ As man from Heav’n derives his every good,
“ So with my Spirit these shall be endued ;— 296
“ Against temptation find superior power,
“ Nor be forsaken in the final hour.
“ But only such as to my laws incline,
“ And nobly keep them,—these alone are mine: 300
“ Not earth’s weak force, nor hell’s infernal bands,
“ Shall snatch or wrest them from their Saviour’s
“ hands :
“ His powers shall shield them; and his guardian care
“ To joys immortal shall their spirits bear ; 304
“ And when that day, which all the guilty dread,
“ To endless life shall wake the trembling dead,
“ These sons of light, escap’d from grief and pain,
“ Shall with the Saviour judge the world and reign.”

“ These serious truths and awful scenes amuse,
 And strangely harden the obdurate Jews. 310
 Some his pretensions, some his birth deride,
 And some condemn his poverty and pride :
 “ Was not this prophet,” they exclaim’d with scorn,
 “ Of mean descent, a Galilean born !
 “ In little Nazareth his parents live, 315
 “ And want those alms which he affects to give.
 “ His father works at a mechanic trade,
 “ His mother proofs of poverty betray’d :
 “ His mean relations mingle with our tribes, 319
 “ Nor take those nostrums which his pride prescribes.

L. 317. *His father works at a mechanic trade.*] I know the word τέκτων, as well as *faber* in the Latin, has a larger signification than our English carpenter ; and some of the fathers were of opinion, that Joseph was *faber ferrarius*, a blacksmith, as he is called in the Hebrew gospel of St. Matthew ; but the greater stream of writers suppose him to have been a carpenter : thus Justin-Martyr, who affirms, that our Lord himself did make ploughs and yokes ; and indeed he is called τέκτων, St. Mark, vi. 3. and therefore, it may be presumed, actually wrought at his father’s trade. Capernaum is about twelve miles distant from Nazareth.

L. 319. *His mean relations mingle with our tribes.*] These relations of our Lord, called his brethren in holy writ, according to the Jewish way of speech, seem to be no more than his cousins german, or sons of his mother’s sister ; for she that is called the mother of James and Joses, St. Mark, xv. 47. and xvi. 1. is styled Mary the wife of Cleophas and Jesus’s Mother’s sister, St. John, xix. 25.

“ Will this self-taught usurper of the sky,
“ His father, mother, and his friends deny ?
“ Or must we think, by some strange magic given,
“ That all the family came down from heaven ?”

“ Our Lord replied—“ If these you disbelieve,
“ How will you truths still more sublime receive ?
“ Again I speak, attend to what I say : 327
“ I came from heaven, and am to heaven the way.
“ My body bleeds a sinless sacrifice ;
“ My flesh is bread ; who eats it, never dies. 330
“ My blood effus’d, my Godhead makes divine,
“ Which flows in streams to answer God’s design :
“ Unless through these you happily obtain
“ Eternal life, your hopes of bliss are vain.
“ You seem amaz’d that I from heav’n came down,
“ Without my glory, diadem, or crown ; 336
“ But scenes to come will greater wonder raise,
“ When from my grave I reascend the skies,—
“ When holy angels in my train you find,—
“ A cloud my chariot, and my wings the wind. 340
“ O hard of heart, perverse to understand
“ What I reveal, or do what I command,
“ Your carnal minds, immers’d in sensual love,
“ Cleave to the earth, nor soar to things above :

“ A mystic sense the words I speak convey, 345
 “ Which leads believers to eternal day.”

“ But no discourse could prejudice subdue,
 Remove false doctrines, or impress the true.
 The thoughtless crowd, with murmuring discontent
 And strong displeasure, from the Saviour went. 350
 With disappointment they forsook the shore,
 In shoals as thick as when they came before.
 The Saviour saw, but sorrow’d much to find
 None but his twelve remain with him behind !
 Then with those signs which kind compassions
 show, 355
 Thus mildly question’d—“ Will ye also go ?”
 Straight fervent Cephas, who could scarcely bear
 So close a question, ask’d—“ To whom, or where ?
 “ Eternal life, dear Lord, we all implore ; 359
 “ And this we find—and who can give us more ?”

L. 345. *A mystic sense the words I speak convey.*] St. John, vi. 63. “ It is the Spirit that quickeneth ; the words that I speak unto you, are Spirit,” &c.

L. 347. *But no discourse could prejudice subdue.*] It seems plain, that the Jews understood our Saviour’s words, “ I am the bread of life,” in a gross, carnal, literal sense : which mistake our Saviour endeavours to rectify ; but they continued obstinate, and would not give him leave to understand his own words.

“ We know thou must the true Messiah be,
 “ And all our hopes and souls repose on thee.”
 Again he said, while copious sorrows flow,
 “ I know you better than yourselves ye know ;
 “ Your various failings I with tears survey, 365
 “ And mourn for him who will his Lord betray.
 “ His secret thoughts before my eyes are spread,
 “ Though veil’d by him in fancy’s deepest shade.
 “ One of the twelve who stands before me here,
 “ And seems absorb’d in penitential prayer, 370
 “ Allur’d by bribes shall violate my laws,
 “ And act the traitor to the Saviour’s cause,
 “ Perform the part I shudder to foretel,
 “ And move in concert with the prince of hell.
 “ Soon will the fiend become his dreadful guest,
 “ And fill with avarice all his guilty breast ; 376

L. 366. *And mourn for him who will his Lord betray.*] John vi. 64. “ Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray him.” This was a wonderful instance of his humiliation and submission to the Divine will, that, in obedience to it, he chose such a person for one of his family, as he knew from the very first would prove a traitor.

L. 375. *Soon will the fiend become his dreadful guest.*] take the word διάβολος here, one of you, namely, Judas, as a devil, in the largest sense, as it is used in the sacred writings, answerable to the Hebrew יָדוּשׁ, which signifies, as Dr. Hammond and Grotius remark, among other things,

“ And when his deeds appear in public view,
 “ My death will prove the words I speak are true.”

“ Our conscious souls the accusation heard,
 Each ey'd the next, and for his safety fear'd ; 380
 Yet no one spoke, or ask'd him to explain
 Those awful words which fill'd each breast with pain;
 But deeply treasur'd what we fear'd to view ;
 And sad events, we dread, will prove them true. 384

“ But though I strive to tell the works he wrought,
 The mighty sum exceeds my tongue and thought.
 While in Capernaum's fruitful coast he stay'd,
 Legions of devils his commands obey'd ;
 His hands the sick to health and strength restor'd ;
 The dead were rais'd by his Almighty word. 390
 Remote and near his fame and virtues move,
 And numbers trembled who disdain'd to love.

an Adversary *in foro*, a delator, an informer, an accuser, especially a false accuser ; so here, *διάβολος*, says one, is as much as *qui deferet me apud principes*, one that will accuse me to the elders. But I understand it in a yet stronger sense : “ He is a devil ;” that is, our Saviour saw that he was already given up to the power of the evil spirit, who would fully enter into him, tempting him successfully to betray his Master.

When our great Lord a fit occasion saw,
He preach'd his gospel to explain the law ;
Reveal'd new truths, and then sublimely tells 395
The schemes of Heaven in lively parables ;
The great designs of prophecies imparts,
Or blames the hardness of his hearers' hearts ;
The veil from scripture condescends to tear,
And shows the people what to love and fear. 400
Some facts remember'd may acceptance find,
And these when heard must speak for those behind.

“ It happen'd once, returning from the feast,
Where Christ at Salem had become a guest, 404
He pass'd through Cana, where his power divine
The crystal water had transform'd to wine.
But while we here within its precincts stay'd,
And some provision for the future made,
A wealthy Lord from rich Capernaum came, 409
With haste and sorrow,—Chuza was his name.

L. 410. *With haste and sorrow,—Chuza was his name.*]

Lightfoot, Walker, and others, think that the nobleman,
St. John, iv. 46. whose son was sick at Capernaum, was no
other than that Chuza the husband of Joanna, who minis-
tered to our Saviour and his apostles, St. Luke, viii. 3.—
which opinion I follow.

The rank he bore in haughty Herod's court,
Had rais'd him high in popular report :
He was by Herod his high steward made,
And upper Galilee his power obey'd. 414
He, in his youth, by pleasures' wiles debauch'd,
Embrac'd those doctrines the Herodians broach'd :
These, worse than Sadducees, or near the same,
Imagin'd virtue but an empty name ;
Thought good and evil were the statesman's tools,
And heaven and hell but tales to frighten fools. 420
Hence all the sect voluptuously employ
Their thoughtless hours in lewd tumultuous joy ;
Each some new pleasures every day contrives,
And all to wickedness devote their lives.

“ Too long with these unhappy Chuza stay'd, 425
By numbers sanction'd, and by vice betray'd.
His conscience, lull'd by pleasure's flattering charms,
Slept too securely in her fatal arms ;
But grace divine the dangerous cheat reveal'd,
And pointed out what passion had conceal'd. 430
His soul, alarm'd, espous'd fair virtue's cause,
And Chuza stood to advocate her laws.
But what, through grace, conspir'd this change to
move,
Was fair Joanna and her virtuous love.

This lovely maiden had preserv'd her fame 435
 In Herod's court, and lighted Chuza's flame :
 An awe for virtue all her words inspir'd ;
 And such as yielded no assent, admir'd :
 Her looks and modesty display'd a mien,
 In *ancient courts* but rarely sought or seen. 440

“ Her, in the crowd, admiring Chuza saw,
 And felt the influence of esteem and awe.
 Her condescension quite dethron'd his pride,
 And chain'd those vices which had been his guide.
 The seeds of grace, in this auspicious hour, 445
 Came to his aid, and exercis'd their power ;
 Till strong like her's his growing virtues prov'd,
 And admiration settled into love.
 Determin'd hence to fix his choice for life,
 He woo'd and won Joanna for his wife. 450
 At her request his sacred prize he bore
 From Herod's court and sin's enchanting shore ;
 And with Susanna, whose maternal care
 Had train'd her mind to piety and prayer,
 Found an asylum and a safe retreat 455
 At his hereditary country seat.
 They had not long in peace resided there,
 Ere heaven in kindness bless'd them with an heir.

The smiling parents saw with heartfelt joy
The dawning virtues of their lovely boy. 46
But soon a fever's unrelenting rage
Their blasted hopes does in his death presage.
The frightened parents, robb'd of hope and ease,
Mark'd the sad progress of the stern disease ;
Wept while he groan'd with unavailing grief, 46
But felt unable to impart relief.
Bent o'er his couch, the mournful mother stood,
And watch'd the pulses of his poison'd blood ;—
Perceiv'd the tides in quick succession roll,
Which beat a march to his departing soul. 47
His tongue was morbid, and his breath was short,
And strong convulsions every limb distort ;
Derang'd, he seizes every object near,
And all the marks of instant death appear. 47

“ But while with tears they gave their son for lost
They heard that on the Galilean coast
Their numerous friends had seen our blessed Lord
And their last hopes confided in his word.

L. 476, &c. *They heard that on the Galilean coast
Their numerous friends had seen our blessed Lord*
St. John, iv. 43. “ After two days, he departed thence
(from the coasts of Samaria) and went into Galilee.”

Strong was their faith; his fame and power they knew,
And each believ'd that Christ could all things do.
The anxious father left the dying bed, 481
And quickly follow'd where his hopes had led;
Then drives his chariot in a race with death,
And posts to Cana, or to Nazareth;
And vows, should he receive his son restor'd, 485
That he and his would glorify the Lord.

“ Near Jephthael's streams he found the friend
he sought,

And his great message to a crisis brought.
Low on the earth and prostrate he ador'd,
And health and vigour for his son implor'd. 490
Christ, who, remote, his earnest vow had heard,
A serious trial for his faith prepar'd.
Yet well he knows, when human bosoms bleed,
How to sustain them in the time of need;
But here his patience and his faith he tried, 495
And his request nor granted nor denied.
Then turning to the crowd his radiant face,
He thus exclaim'd—“ O unbelieving race,

L. 487. *Near Jephthael's streams he found the friend he sought.*] A brook of that name in Galilee; the same, I think, with Shihor-Libanus.

“ How far shall infidelity proceed ? 499

“ How long will you these signs and wonders need ?

“ Must faith to sense continue to submit,

“ Nor leave one moment for sincere regret ?

“ Must all these miracles which Heaven bestows

“ Bring no convictions, while they gain applause ?

“ Like meteors shine amidst the gloom of night, 505

“ And strike you blind with supernatural light.”

“ The father all with deep attention heard,
But full of fears this anxious prayer preferr'd :

“ My case, dear Lord, admits of no delay,

“ Nor can my son survive the present day : 510

“ Before I came, I saw him gasp for breath,

“ And faintly struggle in the pangs of death ;

“ If then thou canst departing life supply,

“ Ascend my chariot, or my son must die.”

Christ having heard, this simple answer gives, 515

“ Retire in peace, thy darling offspring lives.”

The joyous father from the Saviour went,

And to Capernaum his swift course he bent.

On his approach, to meet him at the gate,

Elate with joy officious servants wait, 520

Whose eager tongues the happy news impart

To ease the throbbings of the parent's heart ;

Who, full of faith, had previously believ'd
The joyful tidings which he now receiv'd.

"Thy son," they cried, "is suddenly restor'd, 525

"And with his mother waits her absent Lord.

"For him we smile, for whom we lately mourn'd,

"And see his vigour and his health return'd."

The father ask'd with carefulness the hour,

That interpos'd to check the fever's power? 530

"'Twas on the seventh of yesterday," they said,

"That death departed, and the danger fled.

"Surpris'd we saw him then begin to mend,

"But through what cause we cannot comprehend."

"That was the time," the ravish'd father cries,

Lifting to Heav'n his grateful hands and eyes,

"Precisely then the great Messiah's word

"Declar'd my son was from the grave restor'd."

"These truths Joanna heard with tears of joy,

And in her hand led forth the smiling boy, 540

And safe and well to the pleas'd father shows :

The child, well pleas'd, his arms extended throws,

Welcom'd his sire, and innocently said,

"I have been ill, but am not sick or dead."

Great Chuza now, with gratitude and prayers, 545

To all his family his vow declares :

These freely grant he could perform no less ;
And the Messiah, Jesus all confess.

“ Soon after this, when Jesus further went,
(The blind and lame remember this event,) 550
Loquacious fame proclaim'd his march aloud,
While doors and streets display'd a motley crowd.
The dumb declar'd, the deaf receiv'd, his word,
And half dead patients smil'd, to health restor'd.
A touch, a look, their maladies remov'd, 555
And all his garments efficacious prov'd.

“ Among this group of indigent and poor,
Who ask'd redress, and found or sought a cure,
A bold Centurion of the Roman band,
Inur'd to war, to take and give command, 560
Dispatch'd a proxy to relate his grief,
And then petition of our Lord relief :
For with his troops he at Capernaum lay,
To check the youths of factious Galilee.

L. 564. *To check the youths of factious Galilee*] The Centurion being fixed in this place, there seems little doubt but that it was a station of the Romans, of whom there was need enough in that factious country of Galilee, whereof Capernaum was one of the most considerable places, if not the Metropolis.

The cause he taught his proxy to express 565
Was simply this, for which he sought redress :
“ A faithful servant, whom he brought from Rome,
“ Appear’d to wait for his impending doom.
“ In various climes his faithfulness he found, 569
“ On burning sands, and snows, and frozen ground;
“ His arm with blood had dyed the hostile plains,
“ And pois’d the spear in thirty hard campaigns.
“ In fierce extremes his pulse had learn’d to beat,
“ In winter’s solstice and in summer’s heat. 574
“ But arduous toil and dread disease at length
“ His bloom had wither’d, and absorb’d his strength;
“ His nervous muscles cramps conspir’d to bend,
“ And in a palsy bade his vigour end.
“ Helpless for years the faithful veteran lay,
“ A lump of half inanimated clay. 580
“ Departing strength in all his limbs expir’d,
“ And life to her last citadel retir’d.
“ What art invented or what nature made,
“ His friendly master ordered for his aid ;
“ But no assistance could assuage his pain, 585
“ And arts were tried and sums were spent in vain.

“ Among the rest Calirrhoe’s baths were tried ;
“ But these the virtues they contain, denied.
“ The king’s Physician next espous’d his cause,
“ But strove in vain to favour nature’s laws. 590
“ His helpless case the master’s tears deplore,
“ And much he sigh’d that he could do no more.
“ A servant thus for faithfulness renown’d,
“ His generous master a companion own’d :
“ Valiant and true, in danger often tried, 595
“ Nor gold nor fear could make him leave his side,
“ In expeditions forward to obey,
“ Nor would the secrets which he knew betray.”

L. 587. *Among the rest Calirrhoe’s baths were tried.*] Josephus describes these waters, both in his *Antiq. lib. 8. cap. 17.* and in *Bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 25.* He says, “ They arise about Machærus, from two springs of contrary natures, one hot and sweet, the other cold and bitter ; which, meeting together, have many excellent virtues, giving health, both by drinking and bathing, for several diseases :” though Herod the Great tried them in vain by the advice of his Physicians, they being like to kill him, instead of curing him. These waters are so plentiful, that they not only run off, but make a fair current or river, on whose banks stood the ancient city Lasha, afterwards Calirrhoe, whence the baths themselves are named, being styled by Josephus, the baths of Calirrhoe, as our Tunbridge-Waters take their name from the town, though it is at a considerable distance from them.

“ His master, finding human efforts vain,
“ Sought for divine, for these alone remain. 600
“ In this distress the Saviour’s fame convey’d
“ The wondrous tidings of the cures he made.
“ The master rising with attention heard,
“ And Israel’s Monarch before all preferr’d. 604
“ He lov’d the Jews, and their religion prais’d,
“ And a small temple by his bounty rais’d.
“ His servant now he hasten’d to convey
“ To Christ, and him at Jesu’s feet to lay.
“ But soon he found him gasping hard for breath,
“ And struggling in the agonies of death : 610,
“ He then resolv’d himself to Christ to go,
“ But thought himself too worthless, mean, and low,
“ Unfit to ask for blessings unprepar’d
“ (A fact which proves he did not know the Lord :
“ Since none by merit were prepar’d to stay,—
“ None for humility were turn’d away).” 616
“ Jairus the Saviour of the world implor’d
To have the servant of his friend restor’d ;

L. 617. *Jairus the Saviour of the world implor’d.*] St. Luke vii. “ The Centurion sent unto him the elders of the Jews.” The rulers of their synagogues were chosen out of the elders ; one of these rulers was Jairus, with whom undoubtedly the Centurion was intimate, since he himself had built the Jews a Synagogue.

A train of friends supported his request,
And the same point importunately press'd. 620

“ Soon as our Lord the circumstances heard,
He left the place, and to the house repair'd.
His kind designs the bold Centurion knew,
And much he wish'd, but fear'd, an interview. 624
He heard and said, “ Such actions must not be,
“ Such condescension is too great for me.
“ My house, my heart, my household are too mean,
“ A guest so great to lodge or entertain.
“ But as my soldiers, when they hear my voice,
“ Obey my word, and know no other choice ; 630
“ Attend observant on each secret sign,
“ And yield their wills submissively to mine ;
“ So let Messiah, whose Almighty sway
“ The laws of nature steadily obey,
“ Declare his will, and at his sovereign word 635
“ My worthy servant shall be quite restor'd.”

“ At this reply the Saviour, looking round,
Declar'd, such faith was not in Israel found.
“ But Israel's sons,” he said, “ shall not alone
“ Partake of glory and enjoy my throne. 640
“ In every nation, those among mankind
“ Who fear and love me with a holy mind,

“ Shall find acceptance in the final hour,
“ And feel deliverance from infernal power. 644
“ For faith like this assumes a strong command,
“ Which Heaven itself refuses to withstand :
“ And while some sons of Abraham hope in vain,
“ These shall in glory with the prophets reign.
“ Go tell the Roman his request is seal’d,
“ And his brave servant of the palsy heal’d.” 650
He said—the servant instant strength receiv’d,
And the Centurion and his house believ’d.

“ But vain were all my efforts to relate
What swarms he rescued from impending fate ;—
How with a touch he Simon’s mother rais’d,—
How him the joyful paralytic prais’d, 656
How Jairus’ daughter was to life restor’d,
And quickly mov’d obedient to his word ;—
What virtues issued from the robes he wore,— 659
What daring insults from the crowds he bore ;—
What wondrous truth his tongue vouchsaf’d to tell
To her who met him close by Jacob’s well, 662
What time he travell’d through Samaria’s waste,
And bade her view the future and the past ;—
How many, long of nat’ral light bereav’d, 665
Their visual orbs and mental sight receiv’d.

These truths Bethsaida's happy confines know;
And these thy gates, delightful Jericho.

“ If Bartimeüs, who this sacred hour
Lives a memorial of the Saviour's power, 670

Were here to mention what some thousands knew,
And which his eyes have seen and felt was true;
The strong relation would conviction dart,
And pierce the stoutest unbelieving heart. 674

The poor old man through many a doleful year
Had walk'd in darkness, and had felt despair;—
Had been from earliest recollection blind,
While deeper shadows overwhelm'd his mind.

Despis'd, abandon'd, miserably poor, 679
He liv'd on alms, and begg'd from door to door.

His feet unshod, his head with baldness bare,
Sustain'd each change of the inclement air.

Oft at the lovely Balsam Garden's gate

These eyes have seen the reverend beggar wait,
Bending beneath the pressure of his years, 683

And humbly asking charity with tears.

L. 683. *Oft at the lovely Balsam Garden's gate*] For which
the Jews quarrell'd with the Romans. See Josephus.

It happened here, as Jesus pass'd along
Encircled closely by a moving throng,
That he the trampling of their feet could hear,
And knew some cause had brought the concourse
near ; 690

And by some impulse earnestly inquir'd
Who went that way ? and what they all admir'd ?
A stranger heard, and answer'd in reply,
That Christ of Nazareth was passing by.
Soon as the beggar heard the Saviour nam'd, 695
Young hope was born, and faith became inflam'd ;
For he had heard what miracles were done,
And boldly cried—" Have mercy, David's Son."
Some tried to quell him, some to take him thence,
And some rebuk'd his loud impertinence. 700
But all their aims to make him cry no more,
Extorted " Mercy" louder than before.
' Great Son of David, let me mercy find,
' Oh ! shew compassion to the poor and blind."

" His earnest prayers soon reach'd the Saviour's
ears, 705
Whose heart and tongue conspir'd to drive his fears.
He paus'd, and call'd, and would no farther go
Till Bartimeüs told his tale of woe.

The poor old man the joyful tidings heard,
And for a journey to our Lord prepar'd. 710

With trembling haste he cheerfully arose,
And near the gate his ragged garments throws.

His useless staff increasing faith supplies,
And hope rewards him for his loss of eyes.

Groping he walk'd, but stumbl'd in the way, 715
Nor for a guide amidst the crowd would stay.

At length arriv'd, our gracious Lord inclin'd
Why thus he spoke, and what he most desir'd.

"Lord, thou canst give," he with a sigh replied,
"Both eyes and light which Heaven has long
denied." 720

"Thy faith victorious," Jesus straight rejoind,
"Display'd aright, is with my power combin'd.
"Give glory where 'tis due; receive thy sight,
"And plunge at once into a world of light."

Thus having said, immediately a skin, 725
Which shut the windows of his soul within,

L. 709. *The poor old man the joyful tidings heard.*] In the history thus, "Be of good comfort, for behold he calleth thee."

L. 725. *Thus having said, immediately a skin.*] I suppose it a sort of Cataract.

Fell from his eyes, and thus reliev'd his mind,
As mists or vapours vanish with the wind.
Low on the earth he gratefully ador'd 729
The sacred pow'r which spoke his sight restor'd—
Smil'd on the Saviour, and with language meet
Express'd his thanks, and prostrate kiss'd his feet.

“ But time would fail, should I attempt to show
The various wonders you already know.
The blasted fig-tree you have often view'd, 735
And mark'd its vegetative power subdued.
Its wither'd branches thousands daily see
On the great road which leads to Bethany.
Of one born blind, perhaps, your ears have heard,
Who at Siloam had his sight restor'd. 740
The angry Sanhedrim this fact survey'd,
And by their actions serious fears betray'd;
Yet while they strove the wonder to disprove,
They spread the name of Him I wish to love.
At great Bethesda, fam'd for maim'd and poor, 745
He heal'd a man whom angels could not cure :

L. 739. *Cf one born blind, perhaps, your ears have heard.*] He was born blind, and therefore his cure was such a miracle as was unanswerable after all the cavils of the Jews.

But, for this miracle his power had wrought,
His glorious life the Jewish elders sought.

“ Too well (said Joseph) we their envy know,
“ And mourn that virtue should create a foe. 750
“ I well remember many truths he taught,
“ And witness’d many miracles he wrought.
“ I heard his voice amidst the hum of trade,
“ And saw the changes in the temple made ;
“ He view’d their sacrilege with eyes of pain, 755
“ And drove the merchants from their seats of gain.
“ I likewise saw him, when our elders brought
“ The fair adult’ress, in the action caught ;
“ I heard their questions, mark’d their base intent,
“ And knew what all their captious language meant :
“ But self-condemn’d these bold accusers went, 761
“ And left the Saviour and the penitent.
“ Yet fame alone enables me to know
“ The fact your eyes at fair Bethesda saw ;
“ And though I doubt not the report is true, 765
“ I fain would learn the narrative from you.”

L. 761. *But self-condemn’d these bold accusers went.*] St. John viii. 9. “ Being convicted by their own consciences, “ they went out,” &c.

“ There is on fame’s conspicuous lists enroll’d,
In Salem’s market where the sheep are sold,
A famous pool, (the pious saint replied,) 769
Whose healing waters have been often tried ;
Where those who suffer, speedy cures may find,
The deaf, the dumb, the wither’d, lame, and blind.
Here, when the morning sacrifice is made,
You know the power which all have seen display’d;
You know, from heaven some friendly angel brings
The gift of health on his celestial wings ; 776
And he who first immerses in the pool,
Receives a cure, and stands completely whole.

“ The man I mention’d, full of pains and fears,
Had felt disease for eight-and-thirty years : 780
His friends through pity brought him in his bed,
Which near the margin of the pool they laid :
But while he waited the auspicious hour,
And mourn’d his sufferings and his want of power,
He saw another step into his place, 785
And seize the miracle before his face.
Such disappointments always doom’d to bear,
Murder’d his hopes, and kept alive despair ;
He felt his torments, nor could find relief,
But spent his moments in desponding grief. 790

The Saviour saw and mourn'd his deep distress,
And kindly ask'd him if he sought redress ?

“ In death,” he said, with anguish and neglect,

“ I hope for ease, but nothing more expect. 794

“ Through friends the wealthy find a speedy cure,

“ But most neglect, and some insult, the poor.”

“ Thy woes are past,” the Son of God replies,

Infus'd a power, and then he said—“ Arise.”

His nerves grew strong, with health his visage glow'd;

His blood through long forgotten channels flow'd;

His blasted limbs their Maker's words obey ; 801

He rose and walk'd, and took his couch away.

In every part the change his eyes perceiv'd

Appear'd too wonderful to be believ'd.

“ Such crimes as these, for crimes to them they
were, 805

Strangely provok'd the Sanhedrim to war.

The sabbath-day, on which the cure was wrought,

Furnish'd his foes with the pretence they sought ;

And so far prejudice their minds engross'd,

That *in the day* the miracle was lost. 810

Yet while these actions prove he came from heav'n,

They also prove they need not be forgiven :

Those powers which either soul or body mend,
Must be divine, and cannot God offend.
All works of love, he publicly confess'd, 815
Broke not that day which God design'd for rest.
He blam'd traditions; but he blam'd them, where
With laws divine they clash and interfere.
He, full of meekness, merciful, and kind,
Obedience, faith, and law, and gospel join'd. 820
Compassion, alms, forgiveness he display'd,
And all the virtues tests of credence made.
Such proofs as these the Saviour sought and gave,
Who came his people from their sins to save. 824
Sometimes he spoke, and, like the seers of old,
These truths sublime in mystic figures told ;
Then in plain language numerous crowds address'd,
And brought conviction to the guilty breast."
More might be said ; but I begin to fear
Already I've too long detain'd you here. 830

L. 817. *He blam'd traditions; but he blam'd them, where.*]

He says to his disciples, whatever the Pharisees command, that observe and do ; that is, undoubtedly, in cases indifferent ; since he was very severe against them, as in the business of Corban, where they made God's word of no effect by their own traditions.

Important lessons I could still recite,
Replete with wisdom, profit, and delight."

The speaker ceas'd: but what remains, all pray
To be indulg'd with on th' ensuing day.

END OF VOL. I.

A. PARIS, Printer, Took's Court,
Chancery Lane, London.





THE THREE MARYS GOING TO THE SEPULCHRE.

THE
LIFE OF CHRIST,

A P O E M :

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN

BY THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY,

VICAR OF EPWORTH IN LINCOLNSHIRE,

Father of the late Rev. and venerable JOHN WESLEY :

CORRECTED, ABRIDGED, ENLARGED BY MUCH
ORIGINAL MATTER, AND PRESENTED TO THE
PUBLIC IN AN ALMOST ENTIRE NEW DRESS :

BY THOMAS COKE, LL. D.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

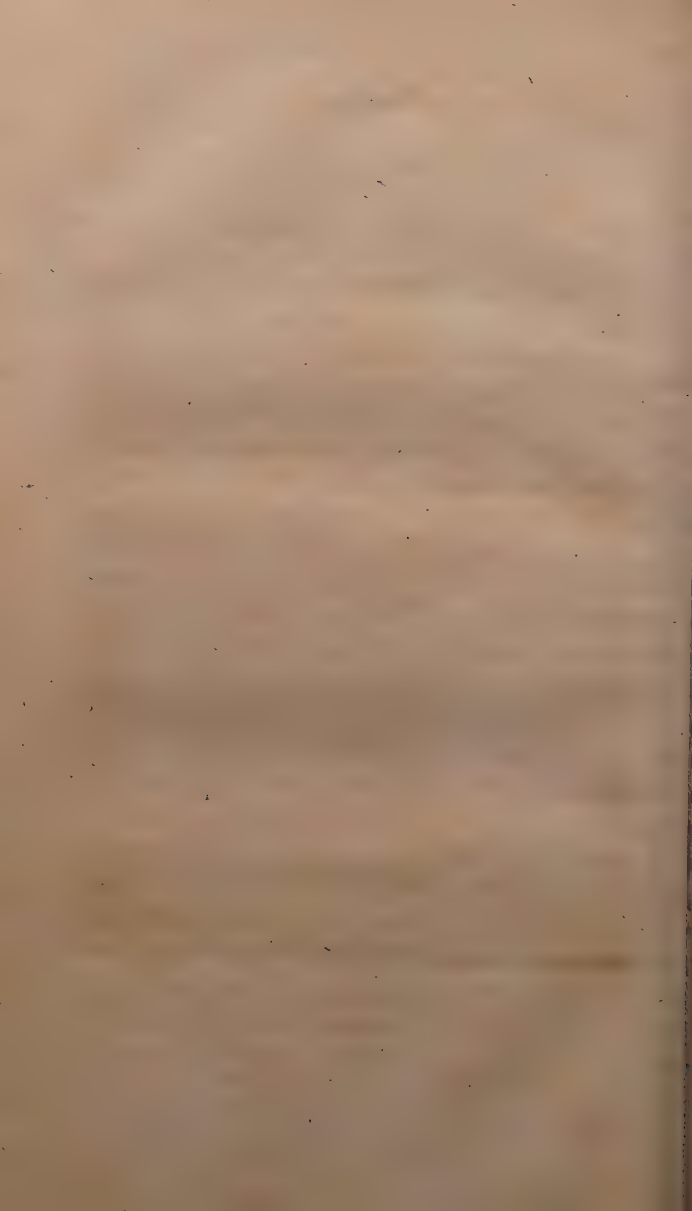
PRINTED FOR DR. T. COKE,

AND TO BE HAD OF THE REV. MR. BLANCHARD,
14, CITY ROAD ; AND

Of all the Methodist Preachers in Great Britain and Ireland.

1809.

A. PARIS, PRINTER, TOOK'S COURT.



CONTENTS

OF THE

SIXTH BOOK.

THE company having met again by appointment the following evening, St. John recites several of our Lord's parables; that of the wicked Judge and importunate Widow, the cruel Servant, the rich Miser, the Pharisee and Publican, and more at large that of the Prodigal Son. He then relates the narrative of Dives and Lazarus; which finished, Chuza, who was an acquaintance of Gamaliel, being in town against the Passover, comes to his house, and brings his friend the Centurion with him; where finding St. John and the other apostles, whom he had formerly seen in Galilee, he desires a fuller account of the mysteries of the Christian Faith, and of the person of our Saviour. This the beloved disciple accordingly gives him in a Pindaric ode, asserting the divinity and eternity of our Saviour, as he has done in his gospel and epistles; describing the Trinity in the greatest part of the first three stanzas; the creation of the world by the Son in the fourth; the fall and redemption in the fifth and sixth; proving our Saviour's existence before his birth upon earth, by his appearing to, and conversing with, the patriarchs in human form,

and like an Angel with the Israelites, in the seventh; further, in the eighth, proving him to be God by Isaiah's vision and prophecy; and that he some way or other enlightens all men, as he is the Divine Word and Essential Reason, in the ninth. This ended, Gamaliel acknowledges his conviction of the truth, the company break up, and the three apostles return to our Saviour.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

AGAIN the following eve the party meet,
And with due courtesy each other greet.
John then began——“ I gladly will relate
The prodigal's return, and miser's fate ;
The cruel servant and his injur'd lord,
Who a strong emblem of mankind afford ;
The judge regardless both of God and man—
The widow—Pharisee and Publican :
Each theme presents us with a spacious field ;
And all, of truths a plenteous harvest yield.

“ A judge there was, no matter where or when,
Who acted umpire to contending men.

Grown fat with bribes, and orphans' tears and blood,
The wretch, dishonour'd, on no conscience stood.

A widow near him charg'd a cruel lord 19

With bathing in her husband's blood his sword.

Poor and defenceless, and expos'd to wrong,

She felt the rage of each malignant tongue ;

Oppress'd by power, unfriended by the laws,

She found no friend to advocate her cause ;

She held no gold, or not enough to bribe 25

Or oil the organs of some smooth-tongu'd scribe :

In this distress, not knowing what to do,

Which way to stir, nor yet to whom to go,

She took strange steps her ruin to prevent,

And to the fountain of injustice went : 30

There with loud cries besieg'd the judge's door,

And boldly begg'd him to assist the poor.

“ The wretch, at first regardless of her cries,
Soon grew perplex'd with her incessant noise ;

L. 18. *The wretch, dishonour'd, on no conscience stood.*]
The same with, he feared not God, nor regarded man.

And bade his servants, who around him wait, 35
To teach his dogs to drive her from the gate.
But this base task the servants found in vain ;
The banish'd widow soon return'd again,
Disturb'd his meals, alarm'd him when he slept,
And round his palace ceaseless vigils kept. 40
If she perceiv'd him to the bench repair,
Visit his friends, or ride to take the air,
She, closely watching all the turns he made,
Dogg'd like a ghost, and haunted like a shade.
Where'er he went, her cries were always found, 45
And "Justice, Justice," through the streets resound.
In vain he rages, threatens, fumes, and swears,
His oaths and curses but augment her tears ;
And while his officers the lash apply
To make her silent, they increase her cry. 50

" At length his anger turn'd to serious thought,
Which in his breast this selfish reasoning wrought :
' Although (he said) I feel no love nor care
' For God or mortals—but contempt for her,
' I must avenge her of her deadly foe, 55
' Or be tormented wheresoe'er I go :
' My rest is broken when I lie in bed ;
' And if not silenc'd, she will talk me dead."

Determin'd thus, he order'd her to come,
And state her grievance in the audience room. 60
She spake; he heard, and granted what she sought,
And from base motives did the thing he ought.
And while her foes their punishment deplore,
She rais'd her siege, and left his lordship's door.

“ From hence this moral every heart may learn,
And every eye conspicuously discern : 66
If importunity the worst can sway,
And brave injustice in the face of day ;—
If it prevail in this terrene abode
With foes of men and enemies of God, 70
It must succeed when it ascends the sky,
And pleads with him who reigns enthron'd on high.
Not that Jehovah can be tir'd with prayer,
Can act unjustly, or supinely err ;
Yet, though dispos'd to listen with regard, 75
For all his blessings man is unprepar'd ;
Till faith and hope from penitence arise
To fit his bosom for divine supplies.
He, arm'd with vengeance, can support alone 79
Those souls who now beneath the altar groan.
The wrongs they suffer, justice shall repay,
And strike their foes with terror and dismay.

Thus while his justice punishment secures,
Through me, his wisdom makes his mercy yours."

" We heard this parable with pleasing dread ;
When thus the Saviour, in another, said : 86
" A wealthy lord, just and benevolent, }
Ten thousand talents to his servant lent, }
Who liv'd luxurious till the whole was spent. }
His lord suspected, from the course he took, 90
That much was wasted, and survey'd his book ;
When strong surmises to assurance turn'd,
And much the master for the servant mourn'd.
He saw distinctly, on a cool survey,
He could nor principal nor interest pay ; 95
He strictly then the whole amount demands
Of all the talents trusted in his hands.
Speechless and pale the wicked servant stood,
For conscious vileness had congeal'd his blood.
His injur'd lord, most justly unappeas'd, 100
Order'd that he and all he had be seiz'd ;
When at his feet th' insolvent debtor fell,
Begg'd time, and promis'd all he had to sell,

L. 88. *Ten thousand talents to his servant lent.*] Which, according to my calculation, supposing the talent but silver, is three millions seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

And all the bounties of his friends to try,
Rather than languish in a jail and die. 105

These artless methods quite successful prov'd,
His words and tears the generous master mov'd ;
Nor would he seize him, and his house enslave,
But through compassion all the debt forgave.

This wretch, dismiss'd, a fellow-servant met, 110

Who, when they reckon'd, ow'd a trifling debt ;
A hundred pence compos'd the whole amount,
Which, when discharg'd, would balance the account.

This petty tyrant him with furious hands
Seiz'd by the throat, and every mite demands. 115

Low at his feet his fellow-servant lay,
Begg'd time, and promis'd all he ow'd to pay ;

But anguish here could no advantage gain,
And prayers and sorrow urg'd their plea in vain.

He straight was chain'd, and into prison thrown,
But soon his case was to his fellows known ; 121

Who fear'd that doom their tears in vain deplore,
And these transactions to their master bore.

He heard, and for his wicked servant sent,
And thus indignant gave his feelings vent : 125

“ Detested wretch, inhuman and severe,

“ Deaf to distress, and blind to every tear !

“ Did not I teach thee, by my favour shown,
“ To feel his woes, and make his case thy own?
“ Did not thy Lord remit the mighty sum 130
“ At thy entreaties, and reverse thy doom?
“ Go thou to prison, and thy fate deplore,
“ And think of mercy and reprieves no more.”

Thus shall the justice of my Father do, 134
Thus pour his vengeance on the world and you;
Unless you learn your brethren to forgive,
And copy Heaven while here on earth you live.

“ Would you the riches of the world contemn?
Learn from what follows how to value them.
The fate of vice may virtue's cause befriend; 140
And therefore listen to the miser's end.

“ There was a miser whose unbounded hoard
Surpass'd the treasures of the wealthy lord.
His vast domains on every side arose,
And falsely promis'd to his soul repose. 145
His bags were full, his chests were running o'er,
His barns and coffers could contain no more.
In every corner of his yard he sees
Huge stacks of corn and spacious granaries.

Though doom'd the curses of the poor to hear, 150
He hop'd a famine in the coming year ;
And with strange feelings felt his bosom glow
With wealth arising from the public woe.
Oppress'd with gold, and sunk in worldly care,
He no attention for his soul could spare. 155

Perhaps he fancied he might always please
Her views, with riches, or voluptuous ease.

The wretch, revolving what strange course to take,
Resolves new granaries and barns to make. 159

" Pull down," he said, " these hovels rais'd before,

" And make more room for my increasing store.

" On all we do the flattering moments smile,

" And wealth and mirth the hastening hours beguile.

" Live then, my soul, enjoy the boundless store,

" And in thy triumphs think of nothing more. 165

" Enough is thine to banish every fear,

" Though blights and mildews blast the coming
year."

These impious words the churl had scarcely said,
And lock'd his grain while thousandssigh'd for bread,
Ere Heaven in thunder his perdition seal'd, 170
Which thus in frowns Omnipotence reveal'd :

" Presumptuous fool ! thy anxious cares deceive,

" And Heaven forbids thee one day more to live.

“ This night the fiends shall seize, not thine, but
thee ; 174

“ Then whose shall all thy boasted treasures be ?”

“ Against these mighty ills hence learn to pray,
And for your souls improve the passing day.
The soul through grace requires all your care
To root out vice and plant each virtue there :
And when the utmost of your work is done, 180
With humble modesty you all must own
That your best actions in this dark abode
Have been productive of no gain to God.
Pride is a rock which fiends of angels made,
A rock where thousands daily are betray'd. 185
Despise not others, nor yourselves commend,
The best must want a sin-atonning Friend.
To bring this truth distinctly to your ears
And hearts, another parable occurs : 189

“ Two men who dwelt in Solyma there were,
Who to the temple went one morn to prayer:
One was a specious Pharisee ; and one,
Despis'd by all, a guilty Publican.
With conscious pride of dignity, the first
Felt no remorse to call the other curs'd. 195

“ Begone,” he cried, “ degenerate and profane,
“ Nor look to Heaven, for all thy prayers are vain.
“ Let not thy touch these sacred robes pollute,
“ Nor dare to tamper with forbidden fruit.”

Thus full of pride he to the altar goes, 200

And speaks to Heaven to tell how much it owes.

“ Almighty Lord,” he said, “ I bless thy name

“ For such a life as envy cannot blame.

“ I am not, Lord, as other sinners are,

“ Unjust, or vile, or an extortioner. 205

“ By virtue’s rules my holy life I squar’d,

“ And oft have smil’d while guilty wretches fear’d.

“ Through deeds of mine not one has groan’d or bled,

“ Nor have my thoughts defil’d my neighbour’s bed.

“ I do my duty both to God and man, 210

“ And see my contrast in this Publican.

“ In all my weeks two days are always thine,

“ Which make thy moments nearly equal mine.

L. 198. *Let not thy touch these sacred robes pollute.*] His fringes and phylacteries.

L. 212. *In all my weeks two days are always thine.*] The fasts of the Jews were on Mondays and Thursdays, from a tradition among them, as Drusius says, that Moses went up to Mount Sinai on a Monday, and came down on a Thursday.

" My stores, though large, have lawfully increas'd,
" Nor have I wrong'd thy temple or thy priest.
" Each branch of tyne I righteously bestow, 210
" And pay exactly every debt I owe ;
" While some, reclining at the sumptuous board,
" Defraud thy priests, thy temple, and their Lord,
" And in these sin's eyes triumph more 220
" Than in those crimes which mark'd their lives
before :
" Where'er the herbs which in my garden grow,
" The various gains which from my labours flow,
" Withhold their tenth : that tenth I own is thine,
" Nor, ere I pay it, touch the other nine." 225

" Thus spoke the Pharisee distinct and clear,
And gaz'd around in hopes that some might hear ;
While in the outer court, the Publican
With faltering voice and downcast eyes began :
" O Thou, whose eyes the souls of men survey,
" And view'st their actions in the light of day,
" Thou know'st the crimes I tremblingly confess,
" And seest the passions which my soul possess.
" For all my crimes thy mercy I implore,
" And ask thy grace that I may sin no more." 235

Thus while his tears his penitence express'd,
His hand extended smote upon his breast.
I tell you plainly, that the man who mourn'd,
Pardon'd and joyful to his house return'd ;
While he who felt no consciousness of blame, 240
Retir'd in guilt more harden'd than he came."

" Thus spoke our Lord: but that which crown'd
the whole,

Impress'd conviction, and pervades my soul,
Concern'd the prodigal, who went abroad,
And left his sire, as sinners leave their God. 245
Deep in my heart the parable remains,
Its living features still my soul retains ;
And were not day well wasted—" Waste no more,"
Gamaliel cries, more earnest than before ;
While Nicodemus join'd in his request, 250
And in these words his sentiments express'd :
" Those waste the day, who wickedly employ
" Their precious moments in voluptuous joy ;—
" Who urge the hours which quickly pass away,
" And cheat themselves, but think they cheat the
day ; 255
" Or plunge in vices which we blush to name,
" And forfeit Heaven to gain dishonest fame.

" But those, like us, who life and friendship taste,
 " Improve those minutes others only waste,
 " And calmly view without a blush, and own, 260
 " The happy periods when for ever gone.
 " But pray proceed, those parables recite
 " Which give instruction and impart delight.
 " Slip not one thought, one passage, or one word,
 " Which marks the wisdom of your heavenly Lord.
 " The mere relation tempts us to adore; 266
 " Believe we long to hear of this and more."

Then thus the younger son of Zebedee,
 When now he found he should not tedious be :

" A good old sire there was, whom age and cares
 Had bless'd with wealth, and crown'd with silver
 hairs. 271

Two sons he had, advanc'd to riper years,
 O'er whom he watch'd with many prayers and tears.
 The elder, careful, earn'd his bread with pain;
 The younger, wild, was prodigally vain. 275

L. 275. *The younger, wild, was prodigally vain.*] Grotius justly observes, that among all our Saviour's parables, this seems to be adorned with the finest colours, and full of the liveliest passions: "*appositum*," says he, in "*Juniore ponitur Exemplum depravati Ingenii*," Youth having generally less wisdom, and more passion, than other ages."

Long had the father seen the last inclin'd
To vice and lewdness, with a painful mind ;
Had kindly spoken with officious dread,
But seen his counsels with new crimes repaid.
He hated work ; but if a splendid feast 280
Display'd its charms, he was of course a guest.
As vice advanc'd, and dying virtue fled,
He scorn'd the life his country kindred led ;
And with associates whom his crimes had won,
Fled to the city, and became undone. 285
In these wild sallies he profusely spent
His own allowance and his father's rent ;
And only through mere poverty return'd
To view the mansion where his parents mourn'd.
The good old man on these occasions tries, 290
With plaintive language and o'erflowing eyes,
Each varied method prudence could invent
To reach his soul and bring him to repent,—
With tears of sorrow begg'd him to depart 294
From his lewd ways, nor break his father's heart.
Harden'd in sin, he basely stops his ears,
Or turns his back to laugh at what he hears ;
And softly whistling while his father mourn'd,
To his kind lecture this reply return'd :

“ If life disturbs my doting father’s fear, 300
“ Of goods and money let him give my share.
“ Then far remov’d, I shall no longer tease
“ His gloomy quiet and penurious ease,
“ But hoard my substance, not profusely waste,
“ With men of fashion, character, and taste.”

“ The good old man, whose hopes subdued his
fears,

Believ’d the culprit, and forbore his tears ;
He thought the manners and the ways of men
Might bring him back to virtue’s paths again ;
And thus deluded all his portion gives, 310
Which the base criminal with joy receives.
To this the mother, for her darling boy,
Added some gold she scrupled to enjoy ;
It long had rusted in her private cell,
And bidden commerce and the world farewell. 315
With these they mix’d their blessings and their tears,
And wish’d him health to crown his future years.
But these the wretch with harden’d disregard
Resolv’d to spurn, and mock’d them while he heard ;
Then took his gold, and join’d a motley band, 320
And quickly hasten’d to a foreign land.

“ Thither arriv’d, rich, profligate, and gay,
Licentious pleasures smil’d to court his stay.
His trunks and pockets teem’d with loads of gold,
And cringing servants bow’d to make him bold.
In masks and balls, in gaming, treats, and plays,
In mirth and wine, he spent his thoughtless days.
Each scene of pleasure he resolv’d to broach,
Of dissipation, riot, and debauch.
Wit, music, beauty, all that gold could buy, 330
Combin’d their powers to cheat him with a lie.
Thus while ambition in his bosom glow’d,
He mock’d the counsel which his sire bestow’d ;
And in the process of his mad career
Smil’d to review his mother’s falling tear ; 335
Despis’d his brother, who, devoid of taste,
His days with clowns in gloomy languor pass’d :
These as a contrast to himself he drew,
And vainly fancied his decision true.

“ At length those bags which held his glitt’ring
store, 340
Were emptied, and could be renew’d no more ;
And in a moment when he little thought,
His scatter’d gleanings to an end were brought.

Awaken'd now to truth, he scorn'd to hear,
He felt his danger and began to fear; 345
And while he thought on his afflictive state,
A dreadful famine brought him impending fate.
In this distress he sought for friends in vain;
New disappointments recompens'd his pain.
His old companions no relief afford, 350
But shut their doors, nor ask'd him to their board.
One, only one, some gratitude possess'd,
And this was less than what his tongue profess'd.
First at his board he sumptuously regard,
Nor keenly felt the famine that prevail'd; 355
His host then hurl'd him from his splendid seat,
And coldly made him with his servant's eat;
Then sternly bade him in the forests dine,
And earn his bread by feeding herds of swine.
With these he lives; but worse than these he fares,
For his allowance does not equal theirs. 361

L. 359. *And earn his bread by feeding herds of swine.*] Bochart tells us, out of Donatus, that there were three sorts of shepherds among the ancients; Bubulci, our cowherds, from whence the *Bucolics*, now a general name for pastoral poetry; the Oviliones, our proper shepherds, the chief subjects of our English Pastoral, though I think least of the Greek; and the Caprarii, or goat-herds, famous with the Grecians. But of swineherds, there is no mention either in Theocritus or Virgil; though what is

On crabs and acorns he beheld them fed,
 A state superior to the life he led !
 Oppress'd by hunger thus, he long'd to steal
 The husks on which he saw the swine regale ; 365
 But though his station was extremely bad,
 He fear'd to lose the servile place he had.
 He dreaded justice,—but he dreaded more
 To die by hunger on a foreign shore.

“ In this condition when his case he found, 370
 Cold, naked, hungry, fainting on the ground,
 The voice of pleasure he no longer heard,
 And all the horror of his state appear'd.
 His murder'd moments which before him stood,
 The slighted counsel of his friends renew'd; 375
 They call'd to mind the gulf which lay between
 His present state, and that which once had been.

greater, grandsire Homer has made Eumæus immortal,
 who was swineherd to Ulysses. Vid. Odyss. Lib. 22.

L. 362. *On crabs and acorns he beheld them fed.*] There is much dispute as to what is meant by these *κερατια*, which we render husks, the Latin *Siliquas*. Some think them the shells or husks of beans, pease, or such pulse; which pleases not Bochart, because he says, out of Theophrastus, those are not called *κερατια*, but *λόβοι*. Others make them the fruit of the Caroub, or wild fig-tree.

He mourn'd that virtue which he once despis'd,
And curs'd that folly which his soul had priz'd.
His father's lectures, and his mother's tears, 380
Rush'd like a tide, and sounded in his ears;
Till lost in anguish he despairing spoke,
And in these words the dreadful silence broke:

“ Unhappy wretch, unwary, and unwise,
“ To quit my parents, and their laws despise! 385
“ Too late I think of plenty reigning there,
“ And die with hunger in complete despair.
“ O could success but crown my bold desire,
“ Or gain some morsels from my injur'd sire!
“ That bread his servants peaceably enjoy, 390
“ Would crown the wish of his abandon'd boy.
“ If here I stay, these eye-lids soon must close,
“ And death but leads to more substantial woes.
“ To reach his house these tottering feet shall try;
“ I can but suffer by the way, and die. 395
“ But should I live—his eyes, which wake to mourn,
“ Will stream once more to see his son return.”

“ Thus having said, with painful steps he rose,
And by short journies to his father goes.

His rags and aspect all his wants betray, 400
And raise him friends to help him by the way.
Of his return at length his father hears,
And strangely smiles amidst a flood of tears ;
Then goes to meet him to assuage his woes,
And all the kindness of a father shows. 405
The happy strangers hasten'd to embrace,
While different passions reign in either face :
Here soft compassion shed the crystal tear ;
But conscious guilt and silent shame were there.
The son, amaz'd this kind respect to meet, 410
Low on the earth embrac'd the father's feet ;
And while half fainting on the ground he lay,
These contrite words his tongue was heard to say :
" Insulted father, do not yet disclaim
" That long abus'd, that dear forgotten name. 415
" If injur'd Heaven and thou can yet forgive
" Those heinous crimes for which my life must
grieve,
" O do not spurn me with contempt, to roam
" A wretched exile from my former home.
" To honours lost thy son will not aspire ; 420
" But give me bread, and I will serve for hire :
" So shall I oft enjoy the long'd-for grace,
" Ev'n though he frown, to see a father's face."

“ To this the father utter’d no reply,
Or only that which started from his eye; 425
But order’d those who stood in waiting there,
“ The festal robes and fatted calf prepare.”
The robes were brought, the richest and the best,
With which his son he hasten’d to invest ;
And then the signet from his finger gave, 430
An honour’d mark withholden from a slave.
The sumptuous feast was instantly prepar’d,
And all his friends with joy the banquet shar’d,
In praise of holiness their hours employ,
And make the penitent partake their joy : 435
Then, as the Seraphs sung to David’s lyre,
Hymns most divine their breasts and tongues inspire.

“ Meanwhile the elder of the sons, whose brow
Was cloth’d with dust, came sweating from the
plough. 439
But much he wonder’d when the lights appear’d :
And when his ears the hymns and music heard,

L. 431. *An honour’d mark withholden from a slave*] A
ring was a mark of liberty with the Romans, and of wealth
and honour in the eastern nations. See Gen. xli. 42. and
St. James, ii. 2.

L. 436. *Then, as the Seraphs sung to David’s lyre.*] David’s
psalms were sung in the temple, when angels were present.

He ask'd the cause : a servant thus replies,
While haste and pleasure sparkled in his eyes :
“ Thy younger brother, whom as lost we mourn'd
“ In distant lands, is to the house return'd: 445
“ This banquet welcomes the repenting guest,
“ And thou art wanting to complete the feast.
“ Haste then, my Lord, for thee thy kindred stay,
“ And crown with smiles the labours of the day.”

“ Enrag'd he heard the strange report they spread,
And seem'd in looks to wish his brother dead.
The good old man soon learn'd his discontent,
And from the banquet to appease him went.
Each guest, disturb'd, began to quit his seat,
And for the penitent they all entreat. 455

But fierce and stern he resolutely stay'd,
And thus severely to his father said :
“ Three times ten years these hands have daily
wrought,
“ And thy estates to full perfection brought.
“ In thankless toils the prime of life I spent, 460
“ And heard thy mandates stupidly content,
“ Thy calls attended, and thy voice obey'd,
“ Perform'd my duty, nor thy rights betray'd;

“ Yet not a kid to entertain my friends 464
“ Could I obtain ;—but here my duty ends.
“ For now thy darling prodigal is come
“ From stews and brothels, stripp’d and naked, home,
“ For him a splendid banquet is prepar’d,
“ As though his actions had thy fortunes rear’d.
“ Give me my portion, and enjoy thy friends ; 470
“ For here I say the obligation ends.”

“ My dearest son,” the aged sire replies,
“ Why glows such anger in thy words and eyes ?
“ Full well thou know’st each branch of my design ;
“ The whole estate, and all I have, is thine.
“ A few more days, and all thy cares have won
“ Must quit my hands, and be henceforth thy own.
“ Why then such murmurs ? why this discontent
“ At the small portion which thy brother spent ?
“ The bread he eats he to our bounty owes, 480
“ And soon must live on what thy hand bestows.
“ Come then, rejoice ; for since thy brother’s birth
“ He gave till now no cause for holy mirth.
“ We thought him dead, but see him now revive ;
“ We thought him lost, but find him yet alive.”

L. 484. *We thought him dead, but see him now revive.*] Those are called *νεκροί*, dead, in the Holy Scriptures, who are lost in vice, or dead in trespasses and sins.

Thus God receives the penitents who come,
And brings to Heaven the faithful exiles home

“ One awful narrative shall close the whole,
Whose force I feel impress’d on all my soul.
Its features stand engraven on my breast; 490
Its various scenes are still before me plac’d,
And time has nothing of their force effac’d. }
The flames of torment glare before my eyes,
And heaven expands with joys of paradise.
And as you seem not disinclin’d to hear, 495
My tongue shall strive to make them re-appear.

“ Not far from hence there liv’d a wealthy Lord,
Who slept on down, and kept a sumptuous board.
His silken limbs were richly cover’d o’er
With royal purple from the Tyrian shore. 500
The softest linen, next his tender skin,
Perfum’d a load of vanity and sin.
Arabia’s odours were procur’d from thence
In nicest order at a vast expense.
Amomum, sacred frankincense, and nard, 505
Regal’d his senses, and their sweets he shar’d.
The fragrant incense which enrich’d the air
Declar’d the land of aromatics there.

L. 508. *Declar’d the land of aromatics there.*] One of the Arabia’s; where they have such an abundance of spices,

At his command his panting servants come,
And costly viands spread along the room. 510
With choicest fare his polish'd tables groan'd,
And all the dainties of the East they own'd.
Those birds on which our ancient fathers fed,
When God vouchsaf'd to give them angel's bread,
The wretch despis'd, and scarcely would afford
Room to dishonour his luxurious board. 516
The beauteous fowls by distant Phasis bred,
Almost as richly as their master fed,
Were doom'd the fate the quails had borne to share,
And spurn'd indignant as unpleasant fare. 520
Costly and *scarce* a quality conferr'd,
And in proportion grac'd his Lordship's board;
And could the fancied Phoenix have been caught,
His immense treasures had the dainty bought.

“ Within a gallery, on whose edge was plac'd
Rich tapestry of Babylonian taste, 526

and want of other fuel, that geographers say, they frequently make use of them for their common firing.

L. 513. *Those birds, &c.*] Quails.

L. 517. *The beauteous fowls by distant Phasis bred.*] Pheasants; which still, in some measure, preserve their ancient name.

Sweet music play'd ; and when his servants bring
Another course, they sweep the sounding string.
To lull his conscience, and suspend his cares,
And charm his soul with melting Lydian airs 530
Anacreon's songs from Greece his flatterers bring,
Which warbling eunuchs, brought from Egypt, sing.
All arts were us'd his appetites to whet,
To make him lawless, and to quench regret.
Stretch'd on his couch, reclin'd at ease he lay,
And meanly saunter'd till the close of day ;
His chariot then he bade his slaves prepare,
And take him out to breathe the evening air.

“ At his broad gate arriv'd, he casts his eye,
And sees a miserable object lie, 540
With ulcers cover'd. Straight with cruel pride
He turn'd his head and haughty eyes aside ;
Then frowning to his crouching servants said,—
“ Remove this wretch—this refuse of the dead.
“ On yonder dunghill let him find a place, 545
“ And perish there—I will not hear his case.”
“ With sportive glee the pamper'd menials heard,
And for the orders of their Lord prepar'd.
With fainting eyes the victim mov'd his head,
And full of anguish all his sores display'd ; 550

Then in low accents utter'd this reply—

“ Permit me here to end my days, and die.

“ I only ask'd the refuse of your board,

“ Those scanty offals which your dogs afford.

“ This little favour let your hands bestow, 555

“ Lest pinching hunger should increase my woe.”

“ If (said the Lord) the wretch presume to prate,

“ Cut short his speech, and trail him from the gate.”

Quickly they dragg'd him over dirt and stones;

But all he utter'd were expiring groans. 560

The hounds sagacious scented his retreat;

And struck with pity seem'd to mourn his fate.

By instinct mov'd, they howl'd to hear him moan,

And taught the groves to lengthen out his groan.

The angry huntsman heard his dogs complain,

And wound his horn to call them off, in vain : 566

For while they saw him spurn'd their master's doors,

They kindly fawn'd, and gently lick'd his sores.

This cause of respite which assuag'd his pain, 569

No tongue was near that could, or would explain.

But finding succour in the pangs of death,

He faintly utter'd with his parting breath,

‘ Requite you, Heaven ! I know not what you are;

“ I go, the glories of my God to share.”

Another sentence to express he tried, 575
Just mov'd his lips, then clos'd his eyes and died.

“ His active spirit from the loathsome clay
Soon took its flight in search of endless day.
Some glorious Angels in the clouds appear'd,
And to its aid their aerial voyage steer'd, 580
Their purple pinions o'er the traveller spread,
And with soft notes their charge to bliss convey'd;
In Abraham's bosom lodg'd the child of grief,
And to his sorrows gave complete relief.

“ The solar beams had nearly left the sky, 585
And shades were rising to arrest the eye,
When the rich glutton through the evening gloom
Return'd in triumph to his splendid dome.
Soon as he reach'd his mansion gates, he heard
The poor sick man was dead, but not interr'd.
This for some moments fill'd him with remorse,
But sensual pleasure soon repell'd its force. 592

“ Then both are eas'd,” insultingly he cried,
“ The wretch had nothing else to do—and died.
“ But as for me, I gaze without alloy 595
“ On future years replete with scenes of joy :
“ And should the foe of human bliss advance,
“ And at my vitals point his ebon lance,

“ The sons of health shall hasten to my aid,
“ And drive the monster to some poor man’s bed.
“ The time may come, when, far advanc’d in years,
“ The scenes of dotage may extract my tears ;
“ When gold and cordials all their joys deny,
“ And leave me leisure to reflect and die.
“ But now I shine in life’s meridian beams, 605
“ And turn my thoughts to more delightful themes.”

“ He ceas’d, and bade his ready slaves prepare
Rich Syrian unguents to perfume his hair :
While other servants with unwearied hands
Prepar’d a banquet by their Lord’s commands.
That night he seem’d resolv’d in joys to live,
And taste what wit, and wine, and lust could give.
A few choice friends, like him unkind and great,
Sat round his board to share his splendid treat ;
And all the viands which his gold could buy 615
Pamper’d the taste, and gratified the eye.
At length the tables of their loads were clear’d,
And songs of mirth, and ribaldry, were heard.
A golden goblet then before him stood,
Surcharg’d with wine, which seem’d to blush like
blood. 620

On its contents he turn'd his wanton eye,
And to their healths engag'd to drink it dry.
He aim'd to taste it, but could do no more—
Both wine and master fell upon the floor.
His friends and servants overturn'd the board, 625
And ran to help their half-expiring Lord.
Physicians, cordials, they procur'd in vain,
His beating heart express'd his inward pain.
His pulse grew weak, a rattle clogg'd his breath ;
His face, distorted, show'd approaching death. 630
In this condition he survey'd his state,
And groan'd with horror at impending fate ;
Then, wildly rolling his distracted eyes,
With stern reluctance breathes a sigh, and dies.

“ His bloated carcase, of its beauty shorn, 635
Grown foul and loathsome, could no more be borne.
The putrid mass his friends with state inter
In his superb parental sepulchre :
Then on his tomb the proud escutcheons grew,
Inscrib'd with virtues which he never knew. 640
But all the flatteries which his friends could boast,
Affected not his melancholy ghost.
His naked soul by devils, in despair,
Was seiz'd, and hurried through the stormy air ;

On him their marks indelible they found, 645
And firm in adamantine fetters bound.

“ Amid the pangs of that distracted state
Which still for mortals who despise them wait,
Through worlds, in torture, he directs his eyes,
And sees afar the disappearing skies. 650
The earth to him became pellucid air,
Nor curb'd his sight, which travell'd here and there.
Beyond this system, a dread gulf appear'd,
Where strange confusion was distinctly heard.
Still further on upon its margin stood 655
The happy mansions of the bless'd and good.
Here glorious Paradise extended round,
And Abraham's presence grac'd the happy ground.
Here holy spirits reign in boundless light,
Expecting bliss approaching infinite. 660

“ Within the precincts of these realms he spied
The soul of Laz'rus, who had lately died.
Struck with amazement at the painful sight,
His torments press'd with more than usual weight:
Urg'd by despair, his distant voice he tried, 665
And thus to Abraham and the beggar cried:

- “ O father Abraham, most supremely bless’d,
“ Hear my remote importunate request ;
“ With pity view me in this world of woe,
“ Expell’d from glories I must never know. 670
“ I cannot share the bliss which you enjoy,
“ Nor be refin’d from this impure alloy :
“ Hence shut from heaven, and lodg’d in black
 despair,
“ My guilty soul could find no pleasure there.
“ Yet still one favour I presume to crave, 675
“ To ease the torments of this flaming wave.
“ Since I in tortures must for ever dwell,
“ O give a less intolerable hell.
“ Is this too much ? one moment’s respite give
“ To one whose anguish must for ever live. 680
“ But if in vain my tongue must plead—nor gain
“ Some great alleviation of my pain,
“ Once more to earth the happy Laz’rus send
“ To act at once the servant and the friend.
“ One drop of water from his hands I claim 685
“ To cool my tongue tormented in this flame.
“ For in this region from the time I fell,
“ Thirst join’d to guilt, has added hell to hell.

“ Degenerate son,” the patriarch replies,
Disclosing just aversion in his eyes, 690
“ The day of mercy is for ever o’er,
“ And Abraham, alas, thy sire no more !
“ There was a period, though it came in vain,
“ When mercy pleaded, and procur’d disdain. 694
“ Full well thou know’st, ungrateful as thou wast, #
“ In that probation, now for ever past,
“ Thou wouldst nor providence nor God believe,
“ Because he suffer’d such a wretch to live.
“ Then thou, in wealth and opulence and state,
“ Bad’st stern defiance to the arm of fate ; 700
“ While Laz’rus there, afflicted, weak, and poor,
“ Liv’d on those alms he begg’d from door to door.
“ Now thou and he are in the balance weigh’d,
“ And Heaven to both has retribution made.
“ He lives in joy, who liv’d on earth to mourn ; 705
“ While thou must feel the rage of flames, and burn.
“ Besides, these gulfs immensely deep and wide,
“ Which your sad realms from Paradise divide,
“ Forbid my foes to hope, or friends to fear,
“ And shut the parties either here or there. 710
“ Time is no more. Mutations now are past,
“ And bliss and torment must for ever last.”

“ Unhappy wretch, forbidden to expire,”
He cried, in tears which seem’d of liquid fire,
“ Too hard I feel the heavy bolts of fate, 715
“ But dread hereafter some impending weight.
“ I feel convinc’d these woes can never cease;
“ Ye powers above, forbid them to increase.
“ O father Abraham! condescend to hear
“ The last request this tongue shall ever bear. 720
“ On earth’s vile surface, where I lately died,
“ I left five brothers full of lust and pride;
“ And my example and persuasive speech
“ Make me half guilty of the crimes of each. 724
“ When their damnation shall to mine succeed,
“ And hurl them headlong to this flaming bed,
“ Each tide of woe which moves the general groan,
“ Will swell their torture to increase my own.
“ O grant, great sire, if Laz’rus must not go
“ To bring me water in this world of woe, 730
“ He may at least to their abodes descend,
“ Awake their souls, and warn them of my end.
“ For though they mock the sacred truths they hear,
“ The most abandon’d will his voice revere.”
“ Thy last request,” (the patriarch replied) 735
“ Small as it is, is urg’d to be denied.

“ If thy lewd brethren scorn the laws of God,
“ Their souls like thine must feel his vengeful rod.
“ To them great Moses and the prophets speak,
“ And show them plainly what to shun and seek.
“ But if those truths, which they refuse to hear,
“ Inspire no virtue, and beget no fear, 742
“ They would not learn were thy commands obey’d,
“ Or yield to one arisen from the dead.”

“ He said: the fiends around their prisoner came,
And struggling plung’d him in a sea of flame; 746
While Laz’rus, basking in celestial bliss,
Forgot those sorrows which in time were his,
In songs of triumph pour’d the notes of praise,
Remote from hunger, sufferings, or disease.” 750

“ This narrative had scarcely reach’d its end,
Ere Chuza came, our Saviour’s grateful friend.
He with Gamaliel at the Paschal feast
Had often sojourn’d as a welcome guest.
With honest Chuza the Centurion came, 755
Whose faith enrolls him on the lists of fame.
The guests arriv’d a due obedience made,
And all the parties salutations paid.

But while with friendship these devoirs went round,
Chuza, amaz'd, the lov'd apostles found. 760

With joy he started at each well-known face,
And folded each of them in his embrace.

“ I did not hope,” he said, “ on entering here

“ To find companions I esteem so dear.

“ But since I know your unremitting aim 765

“ To do his will and spread the Saviour's fame,

“ Our bold intrusion, I have cause to fear,

“ Has interrupted what we wish to hear.

“ Some truths which the Messiah deign'd to show,

“ I know in part, but more I wish to know. 770

“ To that great Man I owe my greatest debt,

“ And view my coldness with sincere regret.

“ I call'd him man, but on this point demur ;

“ His godlike actions speak him something more.

“ Around his face mild rays of goodness shine,

“ His life and laws confess him all divine. 776

“ But how humanity can join !—or God

“ Can be located to this mean abode,

“ Are facts superior wisdom may command,

“ But such as Chuza cannot understand. 780

“ Say, happy men, who in his bosom lie,

“ If aught of this tremendous mystery—

“ If truths which stand to vulgar ears conceal’d,
 May be with safety by your tongues reveal’d ?
 If so, proceed ; and while your words unfold, 785
 “ Our hearts with rapture shall the light behold.”

“ There are, the Son of Zebedee replied,
 Some truths our mission from the crowd must hide,
 Till, less obdurate, they are more prepar’d 789
 To hear those myst’ries which our ears have heard.
 But of those truths solicited by you,
 Rank’d by our Lord among his favour’d few,
 (Who, though exalted, while you much discern,
 From our low converse seem inclin’d to learn,)
 My tongue shall speak : and you shall hear detail’d
 What He in closest privacy reveal’d. 796
 For while my bosom glows with sacred fire,
 I feel his Spirit all my soul inspire.”

“ He said, and paus’d: his hearers strangely gaze;
 His awful grandeur struck them with amaze. 800
 So Truth would look could she a body take,—
 So John appear’d, and so like truth he spake.
 Greater he seem’d, and something more than man,
 And thus in strains of eloquence began :

L. 788. *Some truths our mission from the crowd must hide.*] Jesus spake in parables for the hardness of their hearts.

I.

“Lo! the Eternal Word I sing, 805
 Whose great Spirit my breast inspire!
 While I touch the sounding string,
 Tune, some Angel, tune my lyre!
 Rise, my eagle soul, arise!
 Mount and gain thy native skies, 810
 And view th’ eternal Sun with thine ambitious eyes.
 (If once direct his glories on me shin’d,
 How gladly would I during life be blind!)
 Let thy first bold essay be,
 What would employ eternity, 815
 To sing the Father of the world and Thee!
 —In the beginning of his endless *now*,
 Before this beauteous world was made,
 Or earth’s foundations firm were laid,
 Before th’ officious Angels round his throne did
 bow; 820
 He was,—he ever is,—we know not how.

L. 805. *Lo! the Eternal Word I sing, &c.*] I choose the Pindaric verse here, as being most suitable to the loftiness of the subject: and for my excuse in using it, desire no better than Mr. Cowley’s example. For the matter of the ode, it includes, in fact, little more than what is expressed or hinted in the first chapter, and other places, of St. John’s Gospel.

No mean succession his duration knows ;
 That Spring of Being neither ebbs nor flows ;
 No point can mortal thought assign

In his interminable line ; 825

Nor our short compass meet the circle all divine.

II.

“ What always was, was God, ere time or place ;
 Endless duration he, and boundless space ;
 Fill'd with himself ; wherever thought can pierce
 He fill'd, himself alone the universe ; 830
 One undivided, and for ever one,
 Though with him reigns the co-eternal Son,
 In his eternal mind conceiv'd,
 Not to be argued, but believ'd.

L. 822. *No mean succession his duration knows.*] I am not ignorant that our famous Parker, and the men of new notions, are generally of another mind. But this has not only been the opinion of all antiquity, who thought succession disagreeable to the nature of God, but of the best and most learned of the moderns in our own nation. See the Bishop of Worcester's Sermon on the Mysteries of the Christian Faith; Mr. Bentley, and others, and, among the Poets, Mr. Cowley :

Nothing is there to come, and nothing past,
 But an eternal now does always last.

L. 834. *Not to be argued, but believ'd*] As to the *modus*, I mean, the manner of the eternal generation ; as I explain in the following verse,—ineffable the way, &c.

Down goes my reason if it dare rebel, 835
As through ambition angels sunk to hell.

Ineffable the way ; for who
Th' Almighty to perfection ever knew ?
But he himself has said it, and it must be true.

The Father's image He, as great, as bright,
Cloth'd in the same insufferable light ;
More closely join'd, more intimately one 842
With his great Father, than the light and sun.

Equal in goodness, and in might,
True God of God, and Light of Light :
Him with the Father we adore ; 846
There is no after or before.

Equal in their existence they have been ;
Nor ever did the Son begin ;
No room for one short moment, or bold thought
between. 850

L. 842, &c. *More closely join'd, more intimately one*

With his great Father, than the light and sun.]

This usually is given as an illustration of the Trinity, and particularly the procession of the Son from the Father ; though it must come infinitely short.

L. 847. *There is no after or before.]* That is, all the divine Persons were coexistent from all eternity, and do now equally partake of the divine essence and perfections.

L. 850. *No room for one short moment, or bold thought between.]* The Arians, who had much more to say for their heresy than their modern kindred, did grant, in some of their confessions of faith, that the Son was from all

III.

“ The Father lov’d the Son ; the Spirit came
 From their conspiring mutual flame,
 From both proceeding, yet with both the same.
 Equal to God and the eternal Word,
 The endless Father, the eternal Lord, 855
 With equal reverence be his name ador’d.
 One God supreme, supreme can be but one :
 Three more than names, the Spirit, Sire, and
 Son ;

eternity, by such an emanation from the Father, as that
 whereby the light proceeds from the Sun ; but yet con-
 tended for a moment’s difference between their existence ;
 the Son receiving his, as they think, from the Father ;
 whereby they unavoidably fell into the same absurdity which
 other pretenders to reason since have done : that, I mean,
 of a made God, or a subordinate supreme.

L. 858. *Three more than names, the Spirit, Sire, and Son.*]

It was the Heresy of Sabellius, that the three persons in the
 Trinity were only three names for one person, as well as
 one essence : but there seems no need of many arguments
 to confute it. Names cannot act. Names are not distin-
 guished by personal pronouns ; one name cannot send, or
 satisfy, or attest another. But there are in the divine
 essence different agents, different actions being attributed
 to it ; and those who perform them are distinguished by
 different personal pronouns in the sacred scripture. The
 Father is said to send, the Son to be sent, the Holy Spirit
 to witness. Therefore they are more than names, and I
 think that persons is the plainest word we have whereby
 to express them.

Triad and Monad both, where faith may find
 What strikes philosophy and reason blind,
 Three great self-conscious persons, one self-
 conscious mind. 861

Who made the world is God ; and He
 Who made all time must needs eternal be.

 This by the Spirit did the Son, 864

 The Father's will by both was done,

As was resolv'd in council by the great Three-One.

High on his throne with dazzling glory crown'd,

 Sat the All-good, All-wise ;

 And with his piercing eyes

Survey'd wide fields of nothing round, 870

Privation's airy realms, and waste profound.

To his lov'd Image reigning by his side,

 With equal glory dignified,

 “ Let worlds appear,” he cried !

 “ Those fair ideas be express'd, 875

 “ Retain'd in our Almighty breast.”

L. 864. *This by the Spirit did the Son.*] Gen. i. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters: which could not be a wind; the earth not being yet made to send out any exhalation, or so much as any air to be moved; without one of which, wind could not be produced.

L. 866. *As was resolv'd in council by the great Three-One.*] According to that passage, Gen. i. 26. “ Let us make man in our image.”

Thus far Jehovah said,
And his lov'd Son his great command obey'd.

IV.

“ And first the heavens he built ;
Not those above we see, 880
So gaily deck'd in glittering bravery,
With Luna's silver waves, and Sol's fierce beauties
gilt ;
Far more refin'd, far more remov'd than they :
Their light would soon absorb the solar ray ;
Their light is God's high throne, diffusing endless
day. 885

The Angels next he made,
In love and flame array'd.
The new-born angels cheerfully adore
Their Maker and their Lord, unseen before.

L. 886. *The angels next he made.*] So in Coloss. i. 16.
“ By him were all things created in heaven and earth,
“ thrones, dominions, principalities, powers :” and in the
Old Testament, “ The morning-stars sang together, and
“ all the sons of God shouted for joy,” when the Son, the
“ eternal, essential wisdom of God,” as the fathers inter-
pret it, laid the foundation of the earth ; and if he
made the angels, he could not be himself an angel in a
proper sense, though he is called by accommodation, or
comparison, the Angel of the Covenant ; and by Jacob, the
Angel that preserved him from all evil.

‘Their new-born voice and lyre they try 890

In sweet celestial poetry,

In lofty hymns, and heavenly harmony.

The refuse of their world did ours compose,

Which shines so beautifully bright. 894

Each scatter’d spark of heavenly light,

Falling from thence, some sun or planet grows.

But first on the dark void the gentle Spirit descends;

First matter wills, then form to matter lends ;

First different somethings makes, then makes those

somethings friends. 899

No longer with wild ferment now they strove,

O’er matter’s waves the gentle Spirit did move,

And all around was light, and all around was love.

V.

“ After the glorious orbs above were made,

And earth, and sea, and air were fram’d, 904

The Lord with pleasure all his works survey’d,

And man the king of all his works he nam’d :

But ah ! how short his reign !

How soon by God who plac’d him on the throne,

When lawless he and arbitrary grown,

L. 896. *Falling from thence, some sun or planet grows.*] Alluding to Galileo’s opinion, “ That every globe of the universe was created at a distance from the place wherein it was to move, and thence let fall to the place of its designed residence.”

By God, who had the power alone, 910
Dethron'd again !

But God (as much as what is God can grieve)
Mourn'd for his fate, and fain would save
Both him and that fair world he for his palace gave.

But first he must his justice show, 915

Before he mercy could bestow ;

Then ask'd, what life would satisfy

His wrath, that Adam might not die ?

Archangels trembled ; no bright warriors there

To undertake the vast adventure dare : 920

Rather all earth and heaven they chose to bear

'Than the Creator's wrath. Sad notes they sing ;

Each cherub seem'd to flag his beauteous wing ;

Those gentle spirits signs of pity gave,

And mourn'd the loss of man they could not

save. 925

VI.

“ Then forth th' eternal Son undaunted stood,

(How vast, how infinite his love !

How deeply him did our misfortunes move !)

The dangerous enterprise to prove :

L. 917, &c. *Then ask'd, what life would satisfy—his wrath.*]
This thought has been laboured at by some of the greatest
geniuses that the world has ever produced, Milton, Dryden,
and others ; after whom I should scarcely have dared to
attempt it, had it not been almost necessary to the subject.

To God to reconcile us by his blood, 930
 He did a body for himself prepare,
 To save the world by suffering there ;
 Not like an angel's, form'd of air,
 Which when their work on earth is done,
 Is the next moment into atoms thrown, 935
 But true and solid like our own ;
 In all, but sin, like man. With goodness mild
 On his lov'd Son the Father smil'd ;
 Accepts his offer, and declares
 For him the guilty world he spares ; 940
 While the hateful fiends below,
 Trembling, fear a greater blow ;
 While the gentle spirits above,
 Who mankind protect and love,
 The great Redeemer's glory raise 945
 In lofty notes of godlike praise.

VII.

" 'Twas he who oft, in human form attir'd,
 Stoop'd to our world below,
 As he our state would better know,
 Or company desir'd. 950

L. 933. *Not like an angel's, form'd of air.*] It was the opinion of some wild heretics in former ages, that our Saviour's blessed body was only fantastical, not real : such sceptics it is not worth while to confute.

He often with the patriarchs walk'd ;
 With him they ate, with him they talk'd.

At hospitable Abraham's feast,

He, with two menial angels, was a guest.

'Twas he who did the wandering Jacob guide ;

'Twas he, who, met by Jabbok's side, 956

That valiant shepherd tried.

L. 954. *He, with two menial angels, was a guest.*] Gen. xviii. 1. "The Lord appeared to him ;" as Chap. xvii. "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God : " which could not be an angel, could not be the Father, must be the Son. v. 22. God went up from Abraham ; therefore must have taken a bodily shape, which the Father never did. And in the following Chapter, when the two men, or two angels, went to destroy Sodom, they tell Lot, that "the Lord had sent them to destroy it ;" that Lord whom they left talking with Abraham : and that passage, "The Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of heaven," the very Arians understood of the Father and the Son ; as we find in some of their confessions of faith in Eusebius.

L. 955, &c. *'Twas he who did the wandering Jacob guide ;*
 ——— *'Twas he who, met by Jabbok's side, &c.*] That the angel who delivered Jacob from all evil, and whom he prayed to bless his grand-children, was the uncreated angel, our blessed Saviour, has been the sense of antiquity, as Petavius observes, though he seems not willing to believe it, lest the Church of Rome should thereby lose one main argument for worshipping angels. But without him we are sure he was God : for Gen. xlviii. 15. "The God of Abraham and Isaac, which fed him all his life long," is called, ver. 16, the angel that redeemed him, &c. though no doubt

'Twas he to whom th' expiring father pray'd,
When on his grandson's head his hands he laid.

That uncreated Angel he 960

Whom Moses in the bush did see,

When it with lambent lightning flam'd :

What Angel elsethose titles durst have claim'd, }
In every sacred page Adonai nam'd ?

but it was the same who redeemed and fed him. Again, Exod. iii. 2. "The angel of the Lord appeared in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush:" but ver. 4. "God called to him out of the midst of the bush:" and ver. 6. "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" The same also who wrestled with Jacob at Peniel, Gen. xxxii. who, though called a man, ver. 24. because appearing in the form of man, yet was really God ver. 28. "as a prince hast thou power with God:" and so Jacob himself believed, for he called the place Peniel; for, says he, "I have seen God face to face."

L. 963, &c. *What angel else those titles durst have claim'd,*

In every sacred page Adonai nam'd ?] It

is not proper to make a Jew pronounce the name Jehovah, which was, I suppose, long before this esteemed unutterable, for which was used Adonai or Elohim. Now that the angel which went before Israel, and which appeared often to the Patriarchs, was called Jehovah, is plain in twenty instances: see Exod. xxiii. 20. "behold I send an angel before thee:" and 21. "my name is in him:" now the name by which God revealed himself to Moses and the children of Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt, was Jehovah; Exo. vi. 3. "by my name Jehovah was I not known to them:" and "say to the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." But God will not give his glory, Isai. xlii. 8. his incommunicable attributes and essential glory, to any other being: therefore, whoever has this glory must be God; and

Him great Isaiah saw, whose lofty vein 965

Excels bold Pindar's dithyrambic strain :

He saw, and lov'd, and learn'd his will

Whose glory did the temple fill,

While holy Seraphs waited round,

And Holy ! Holy ! Holy ! sound : 970

And when with sacred fire they touch'd his tongue,

Almost as loud as they he thus their master sung :

this God, the Son, whom the Jews tempted in the wilderness, as the apostle says, 1 Cor. x. 9. and of whom all the fathers interpret it : nay, the very Jews themselves do the same, as I find in the notes on Grotius de Verit. Relig. Christian. p. 368. and also from Moses Ben Nachmen, as quoted by Masius ; Iste Angelus, &c. " That angel, if we might speak the very truth, is the Angel the Redeemer, of whom it is written, my name is in him : The angel who said to Jacob, I am the God of Bethel : he of whom it is said, God called to Moses out of the midst of the bush. He is called an Angel, because he governs the world ; for it is written, Jehovah brought us out of Egypt. And again, he sent his Angel, and brought us out of Egypt. Again it is written, the Angel of his presence (of his face) saved them, to wit, that Angel who is the presence or face of God ; and of whom it is said, my face or presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest : Lastly, that Angel, of whom the prophet says, the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple ; the Angel of the covenant whom you desire. Again, the face or presence of God signifies God, as all interpreters agree ; but none can understand this, unless he is acquainted with the mysteries of the law."

L. 965. *Him great Isaiah saw, whose lofty vein.*] He is generally reckoned of noble or royal offspring. The glory that he saw in the temple when the Seraphim cried, Holy,

VIII.

- “ Sad Israel, weep no more !
 “ Dry those vain tears, those sighs give o’er !
 “ Thy God will thee increase and thee restore !
 “ He comes, he comes, as grateful as the morn
 “ That follows tedious night ! the lovely babe is
 born——
 “ The lovely babe, in whose auspicious face
 “ Already opens each majestic grace,
 “ With virtues equal to so vast a care, 980
 “ And strong the frame of heaven and earth
 to bear.
 “ But who, alas ! who can proclaim
 “ All his high titles and his awful name ?
 “ Proclaim his titles far abroad ?
 “ Stupendous Wisdom ! Omnipresent God ! 985
 “ Eternal Father ! for he’s one
 “ With his eternal Son !
 “ O Salem’s Prince ! with speed thy empire gain,
 “ And o’er the peaceful nations ever reign.”

IX.

- “ Though us, who from the world a difference
 boast, 990
 He with more large effusions does inspire,

Holy, Holy, Isai. vi. was the glory of our blessed Saviour : for so says this evangelist in his life, John, xii. 41. “ These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of him.”

Not the poor Gentiles are entirely lost.
 Their reason glows with his celestial fire,
 His beams than those of Sol more strong and fair,
 Enlightening all, and every where. 995
 They light and life at once impart,
 Through error's scattering mists like thunder dart,
 Direct the head and warm the heart;
 Although, alas! to most they useless prove,
 Who close their eyes, and neither see nor love—
 Hateful to those who in the twilight stay 1001
 When revelation brings the day,
 And fain would show to man the heavenly way.
 Yet still there were a wiser few,
 Who saw, and practis'd what they knew,
 Devout and pious, chaste, and just, 1006
 Who did in their unknown Creator trust :
 These shall acceptance find where'er they live;
 And those who well improve their store,
 Kind Heaven will soon indulge with more, 1010
 And greater talents give.
 That faint, that glimmering light,
 Which pierces through the clouds, and shines in
 spite
 Of error's and of vice's night,

L. 993. *Their reason glows with his celestial fire.*] God
 the Son, who made man, and breathed into him the
 breath of life, is the eternal Λόγος, or first essential
 reason.

If follow'd closely, will such beams display,
 Such orient lustre, so divine a ray, 1016
 As shall increase to perfect and eternal day. }
 This is from God, (the argument stands fair)
 Whô can do all things, and is every where—
 The Word Divine, though not by his receiv'd,
 Expected by the fathers, and believ'd. 1021
 In the Messiah all must centred be :
 And if, combin'd, the Baptist, Heaven, and We,
 Can aught of faith deserve, our Lord is HE."

" When John had done, the audience stood
 amaz'd, 1025

And, speechless pausing, on each other gaz'd.
 The truths they heard appear'd august and high,
 And, like their subject, fitted for the sky,—
 Sublimely soaring far from nature's rules,—
 From Roman eloquence, or Grecian schools. 1030
 Yet Greece had something not unlike them drawn,
 Though wrapp'd in shades, by few but Plato known ;
 These truths the sage from Hebrew fountains drew,
 And stood indebted for the light he knew.
 Yet ancient writers, and the modern tribe 1035
 Of sceptic madmen, to the sage ascribe
 Truths most sublime, and many a mystery
 Of greater age than either Greece or he :

While solid darkness through the world prevail'd,
These brightly shone to Israel's race reveal'd :

But not to all ; the wisest and the best 1041
Perceiv'd their lustre, hidden from the rest.

To these alone his future glories shone,
Who came to make these hidden mysteries known.

Hence all his followers he inspir'd to soar 1045
Through glorious heights which none had scal'd
before.

Hence kings and statesmen, as their deeds avow,
Perceive that light they scruple to allow.

Gamaliel now, convinc'd by what he heard,
Without disguise his sentiments declar'd : 1050

“ From what I hear I must with frankness own,
“ Much light appears upon his doctrines thrown :

“ My mind is chang'd from what it was before,
“ And does the vileness of the age deplore.

“ Your Lord, degraded by our rulers' hate,
“ Is surely worthy of a better fate. 1056

“ But come what will—may Heaven avert my
fear—

“ You and your friends shall find a welcome here;

“ And, on occasions, rest yourselves assur'd

“ Of all that aid our sanction can afford.” 1060

The sun had now those parting beams withdrawn
Which on the summits of the mountains shone.
The company, refresh'd, refus'd to stay,
Warn'd by the twilight of departing day.
Though warmly press'd, they were resolv'd to go,
And seek the partners of their toils below. 1066
Their noble patrons now like servants wait,
And with Gamaliel led them to the gate.
Each took his leave, but dropp'd some tears to part,
And left the others with a heavy heart.
The three disciples to our Lord repair'd, 1071
To give details of what they said and heard ;
While their protectors silently retir'd,
To recollect what every heart admir'd.
Then each, well pleas'd, some bursts of praise
express'd,
And full of gratitude retir'd to rest. 1075

CONTENTS

OF THE

SEVENTH BOOK.

OUR Saviour and his disciples come early to the temple, the music whereof is described, and the several instruments the Jews made use of in their sacred service. The morning anthem. The buyers and sellers in the temple, and our Saviour's driving them thence, pursuing them to Solomon's porch which is described, with the valley of Kidron, and the precipice between Mount Moriah and Olivet. In the meanwhile his disciples survey the buildings of the temple, the gates, and the courts, the pillars, and the golden vine; and, finding our Saviour, with admiration shew them to him. Our Lord then prophesies the destruction of all those stately buildings; describing it more at large, at their desire, as ascending thence and looking back on the city and temple from the mount of Olives; mentioning also the rise of the false Christ, or Antichrist, in the world; and, on their still desiring to know more of these matters, he foreshews the opposition his followers should meet with by the Roman Empire under the ten persecutions; when Constantine, under his banner, should conquer the Heathens, and embrace the Christian religion. After

this, on the degeneracy of the church, Popery arises in the Western world, and Mahometanism in the Eastern; the former of which is followed and checked by the Reformation, and at last both of them destroyed by the power of Christ. He then proceeds to describe the last great day, and exhorts them to be always ready for it, first by the parables of the Virgins, and of the Lord and his servants; and then by a plain relation of the manner and pomp of the last Judgment, the precise hour not being known. The conflagration of the world. The sentence of the just and unjust, and their eternal bliss or misery. The book concludes with a prayer of the author.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK VII.

AT length the sun with his prolific rays
Relum'd the sacred mountain with his blaze.
The temple's roof, which caught his piercing sight,
And seem'd to rival his auspicious light,
He saw, and gaz'd astonish'd to behold 5
Reflected light return'd from burnish'd gold ;
While frightened shades, in swift disorder, shun
It's bold attempt to emulate the sun.
Thus gloomy night resign'd her mournful sway, ,
And gave her empire to the reign of day. 10

Though soon the sun, his Maker sooner rose,
Forbade by grief to cherish long repose ;

L. 10. *And gave her empire to the reign of day.*] The description that we have left us of this temple, is indeed very glorious. Tacitus, in Lib. 5. calls it "a temple of wonderful riches."

To his great Father's temple he repairs,
And spends his wakeful morning hours in prayers.
His chosen twelve accompany their Lord, 15
Join his devotions, and imbibe his word,
Attend with rapture to the sounds they hear,
And seem in heaven on this terrestrial sphere.
But they, to enter, are compell'd to pass
The stately portals of embellish'd brass ; 20
To move a weight no common strength can bear,
Or gain access from those already there.
Here twice ten servants constantly await,
To open wide or closely shut the gate.
On their approach the men within unfold 25
The pond'rous gate that groan'd with heaps of gold ;
Apply their shoulders, lift the massy bar,
And move the cumb'rous pile whose grating hinges
jar.

L. 23. *Here twice ten servants constantly await.*] One of the gates of the temple, as Josephus tells us, was so large, that it employed twenty men, every night and morning, to shut and open it. The same gate also, he says, opened prodigiously, about midnight, of its own accord, with a great noise, not long before the destruction of Jerusalem.

L. 26. *The pond'rous gate that groan'd with heaps of gold.*] The gates of the temple were all covered with silver and gold, except one with Corinthian brass, of more value than any of the other. See Josephus.

The Gentiles' courts, and womens' halls they pass,
And the third door, of rich Corinthian brass ; 30
To Israel's courts they go, and, prostrate there,
Invoke their God with pious hymns and prayer.
In decent ranks the vested priests begin,
The crowds responsive answer from within ;
While music's notes with majesty resound, 35
From gilded roofs the echoing songs rebound,
And distant Zion-hill protracts the length'ning
sound.

L. 33. *In decent ranks the vested priests begin.*] I think there is no great doubt but this was the manner of the temple-service, there being several of the Psalms which seem to have been sung alternately by the priests and the people. We find Heman and Jeduthun singing an anthem of David's composing, and therein praising the Lord because his mercy endureth for ever; to which all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord. 1 Chron. xvi. 36, 41. But the most lively description of the temple-service, which will much illustrate what follows, is that in 2 Chron. v. 11—13. "When the priests were come out of the holy place, also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. The trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound, to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. They lift up their voices with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the

Thus art and nature in the service join,
 And tuneful instruments with life combine ;
 Harmonious voices swell the sacred note, 40
 While sounds melodious on the æther float.
 On *Aijeleth* the concert was begun
 To Him who bless'd them with the rising sun.
 Next the Creator's praises they recite
 On *Alamoth*, in which the chaste delight. 45
 Grave *Jonath*, soft *Mahalah*, mix with these,
 And melting *Harps*, which never fail to please,
 Lord, saying, for he is good, for his mercy endureth
 for ever."

L. 42. *On Aijeleth the concert was begun.*] I here insert most sorts of musical instruments mentioned in David's Psalms, according to the usual interpretation of them. The first is *Aijeleth*, from the 22d Psalm, which is inscribed, *Aijeleth Shahar*, generally rendered the Hind of the Morning, a sort of music, as some think, of the nature of our waits, going about in the courts to wake the priests ; but it was also, we are sure, from David, used in God's immediate service.

L. 45. *On Alamoth, in which the chaste delight.*] These are thought to be a sort of Virginals, and mentioned in Psal. xlv.

L. 46. *Grave Jonath, soft Mahalah, mix with these.*] See Psalm lvi ; inscribed *Jonath Elem Rechokim*, rendered the Dumb Dove in silent places ; like *Mahalah*, afterwards, I suppose, a sort of grave music, fit to compose their minds to attention and devotion.

L. 47. *And melting Harps which never fail to please.*] The *Sheminith*, and all other sorts of stringed instruments.

Cornets and Trumpets, which sometimes inspire
Sublimest raptures and true martial fire.

On these they pour in pleasing notes along 50

Those strains compos'd for royal David's song :

PSALM CXXXV.

HALLELUJAH !

“ Lofty hallelujahs sing
To our own Almighty King ;
Him with hearts and voices raise ;
Him let all his servants praise. 55

“ Ye who ever stand to bless
Before the shrine of holiness,
In his house, with glory crown'd,
Or the sacred courts around ;

“ Him, the spring of life and light, 60
Boundless goodness, boundless might,
Him, and his great name, record ;
The service is its own reward.

L. 52: *Lofty hallelujahs sing.*] A reverend person, an honour to our nation, is of opinion, that this 135th Psalm was used at morning service ; the Priests, Levites, and all the people, inviting each other to praise God.

- “ Ye, O Israel’s sons, rejoice,
Your fathers’ God’s peculiar choice : 65
Great and high ! what idols dare
With the Lord of hosts compare ?
- “ His power no other limits knows
Than what his goodness will impose :
Heaven, earth, and sea, his orders keep, 70
He closely seals the aged deep.
- “ See his clouds make black the skies,
Lightnings glare, and storms arise,
And, freed from their imprison’d cave,
Hark ! th’ impetuous whirlwinds rave. 75
- “ See Zoan’s fields with blood o’erflow’d,
Where he his signs and wonders show’d ;
Ah ! known by their first-born too well ;
First they, and then their fathers, fell.
- “ In vain proud Canaan’s kings combine, 80
Their pigmy arms in vain they join ;
To Israel’s God they captive stand,
And to his hosts resign their land.
- “ Still, O God, thou art the same,
Still we sing thy glorious name ; 85
Our glad hymns thy justice raise ;
And thy pardoning mercy praise.

“ Not so the Gods by mortals made,
To whom vain vows and rites are paid ;
In vain for their advice they come ; 90
Though mouths they have, they still are dumb :

“ Lifeless eyes, which see no more
Than those stocks who them adore ;
Nor their ears the sound can take,
Which their blind devotions make. 95

“ They cannot lean their nostrils down,
Nor ask for incense with a frown ;
Such are they, and such are those
Who on them their hopes repose.

“ Ye, O Israel, who alone 100
The great God of gods have known ;
Ye who guard this holy place,
Mitr'd Aaron's sacred race ;

“ Ye who from great Levi spring,
His illustrious praises sing ; 105
And every soul that fears his name,
You should also do the same.

“ Here let all our voices blend,
Let prayer and praise to Heaven ascend ;
To him who doth in Salem dwell, 110
The Saviour of his Israel.

“ Hallelujah !”

Meanwhile rich incense feeds the sacred fire,
 And clouds of fragrant smoke to heaven aspire.
 Next on the brazen altar bleeding lies 113
 A milk-white lamb, the morning sacrifice;
 With this the priests the holiest Mincha join,
 Compos'd of flour, and beaten oil and wine.
 In silence then their private prayers they make,
 Then listening crowds the sacred walls forsake,
 The Saviour last; but such as still remain, 12
 Transfer their worship to their idol—gain.

L. 113. *Meanwhile rich incense feeds the sacred fire.*
 This was done twice a day; see Exod. xxx. 7, 8. "Aaro
 " shall burn sweet incense every morning. When Aaro
 " lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense." See
 also Joseph. Antiq. lib. 3.

L. 116. *A milk-white lamb, the morning sacrifice.* [Exod.
 xxix. 38,—41, "This is that which thou shalt offer, tw
 " lambs of the first year, day by day. The one lam
 " thou shalt offer in the morning," &c.

L. 117. *With this the priests the holiest Mincha join*
 See Exod. xxix. 40. "A tenth-deal of flour mingled wit
 " the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil, and the fourt
 " part of an hin of wine." This Mincha, meat-offering
 as we render it, with its drink-offering, is called mo
 holy of all the offerings of the Lord. Bread and win
 is the most ancient sacrifice: that which Melchisedec
 brought forth, seems to have been sacred. This is sti
 retained by our Saviour, who was a priest of the sam
 order. See Mede on the Jewish Offerings.

Scarce had they risen, before those worldly cares
Which mix'd dissimulation with their prayers,
Disdain'd restraint, and, spurning all controul, 125
Unveil'd the latent purpose of the soul :
The hum of business fill'd the holy place,
And solemn looks assum'd another face.
The sacred temple an exchange was made,
Its shrines were tainted with unholy trade ; 130
Its courts, profan'd, appear'd a spacious fair,
And pure religion breath'd polluted air.
Some in the cloisters gainful shops unfold ;
Some spread on tables glittering heaps of gold ;
Some, fair-neck'd doves and murmuring turtles bring,
The poor good-man's accepted offering. 136

L. 133. *Some in the cloisters gainful shops unfold.*] The three courts of the temple (which are all included under the same name, because we want two distinct words for the *ἄλυστρον* and *ἱερόσυλον*) took up considerable room, each of them having cloisters round, and a void space in the middle. In the space were the sheep and oxen ; under the cloisters, I suppose, the money-changers and dove-sellers. The roofs of these cloisters, if I understand Josephus aright, served as foundations for those sumptuous galleries round the temple, which Sabinus burnt down in an insurrection of the Jews ; for they could not have been on the covered part, or *ἱερόσυλον*, since it is not probable that they could have burned the top, and left the bottom standing. Vid. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 7. cap. 12.

These fill'd the arches, while the space between
Was closely wedg'd with droves of beasts and men;
Where the dull ox, deliver'd from the yoke,
Awaits unconscious the impending stroke; 140
With stupid ease surveys the bane of life,
The lighted fires and sacrificer's knife:
Of these the largest Bashan's pasture feeds,
Of these the choice that flowery Hermon breeds.
There numerous flocks from Sharon's lovely plain
Stand bleating by, or drag their pond'rous train;
While spotless lambs the next partition fill, 147
Driv'n with more ease from Carmel's fertile hill.
The men, all eager in pursuit of wealth,
Use fraud and falsehood, perfidy and stealth, 150
Ply every nerve to trace the scent for gain,
Revoke their bargains, cozen, and complain.
All were deceiv'd, or else deceivers, there,
And noise and tumult fill'd the troubled air.

These scenes the Saviour view'd, with grief
oppress'd, 155
While painful anguish labour'd in his breast.

L. 148. *Driv'n with more ease from Carmel's fertile hill.*] Because, though that is further from Jerusalem, their tails were not so cumbersome, which were incredibly large in the Asiatic sheep; and therefore I say before, "drag their pond'rous train."

O'er all his face the redd'ning blushes rise,
 And indignation sparkled from his eyes;
 While shame and zeal, which through his bosom
 roll, 159

Thus spoke in words the language of his soul:
 "Hence, ye profane," indignantly he cries,
 "Whose flagrant vices pierce the distant skies;
 "Hence, sacrilegious wretches, nor disgrace
 "With impious feet this consecrated place!
 "This house, where sacred rites have been
 perform'd, 165
 "By trade polluted, and by crimes transform'd—
 "This house, where God the grateful prayer
 receives,
 "Involv'd in guilt, is made a *den of thieves*."

Scarce had he utter'd these majestic words,
 Before his fingers seiz'd the twisted cords; 170

L. 158. *And indignation sparkled from his eyes.*] St. Jerome says here, *Ignem quicquam ex oculis radiabat*, &c., there were certain fiery rays came from our Saviour's eyes, which they were not able to endure.

L. 159. *While shame and zeal, which through his bosom roll.*] Shame for his countrymen, and not for himself.

L. 170. *Before his fingers seiz'd the twisted cords.*] We never find our Saviour, in all his history, so indignant as

For reason's voice must always plead in vain
With men who labour in the mines of gain.
His twisted scourge soon swept the house of prayer,
And drove those holy merchants from their fair.
None durst resist ; all, murm'ring, sneak away,
As sullen spectres flee approaching day. 176
To the bright eastern gate he them pursu'd,
Where Kidron's horrid vale beneath is view'd.
Here horror dwells, and here th' astonish'd sight
Contemplates terror mingled with delight. 180
Here David's son, with vast expense and care,
First bade the walls ascend the yielding air.

he is here, except once before, and that on the same occasion ; for it is thought he drove these sacrilegious wretches two several times from the temple—nothing, I say, ever made him so indignant as their thus confounding things sacred and profane.

L.181. *Here David's son, with vast expense and care.*] That noble tower or porch, which, though Herod re-edified, it seems, still retained the name of its first founder, was built by Solomon ; and its foundations were laid so deep and firm, that the Babylonians could not destroy them, though, no doubt, they ruined the superstructure. If I mistake not, there was the East-gate, the Golden-gate, the Beautiful-gate of the temple, all different names for the same thing. It was built over the vale of Kidron ; and from the top of its towers to the bottom of that valley was of such a vast depth, that Josephus says, it was horrid to look upon, and would almost dazzle the beholders. I wonder how Capellus happened

Deep sunk in mines, the labourers wrought in
shade,

And in vast rocks the strong foundations laid.

Inverted nature saw the fabric rais'd, 185

And neighbouring nations fear'd the man they
prais'd;

Piles heap'd on piles, the stately arches rise,

And half their summits bury in the skies.

Beneath their shade the friendly Saviour taught,

And helpless mortals felt the cures he wrought;

Disease retir'd to spread his fame around, 191

And death and doctors no employment found.

Christ thus engag'd, his chosen twelve the while
Survey'd with wonder the stupendous pile,

to place this porch of Solomon on the south of the temple; which he does, unless Fuller mistakes him; whereas it is seated in the east by Josephus, and, I think, all others. This gate, and the courts about it, cost more pains and time than all the temple; Solomon began to bring earth, and level the valley, but it was not finished in several ages. Vid. Joseph. lib. 6.

L. 183. *Deep sunk in mines, the labourers wrought in shade.*] Josephus says, the foundations of the temple were three hundred cubits deep (sacred cubits we are to understand, in a sacred work, to be twice as long as the vulgar), and in some places more; and that great part of it was built upon the solid rock.

Its firm foundations laid in solid rock, * 195
 That mock'd the thunder's and the earthquake's
 shock :

The massy gates which the wide porches close,
 Tall as the cedars which their leaves compose :
 The spacious courts which could some myriads hold;
 The glitt'ring pillars, and the vine of gold. 200
 The stones so large, appear'd to mock the sense ;
 Each seem'd a mount, and not hewn out from
 thence.

* Vid. Joseph. de. Bell. Jud.

L. 200. *The glitt'ring pillars, and the vine of gold.*] Josephus reckons above 100 of these pillars all gilded, and describes this golden-vine as one of the most noble sacred ornaments in the world. "It reached," says he, "all along
 "under the chapiters of the pillars, whereon hung bunches
 "of grapes, all of gold, each cluster as long as a man." To which vine our Saviour might allude, when preaching near it.

L. 201. *The stones so large, appear'd to mock the sense.*] Josephus, in the account he gives of them, makes them so many cubits long and broad, that we find it difficult to give credit to it: however, it undoubtedly appears from the word of God that they were very large; for so the apostles to our Saviour, who not only shew him in general, St. Mark, xiii. 1, 2. ταῦτας τὰς μεγάλας οἰκοδομὰς, those great buildings; but, in St. Luke, take notice of the stones in a particular manner, ποταποὶ λίθοι, καλοὶ λίθοι, what manner of stones, what goodly stones, as we very well render it. And

These blocks, vast ribs of cramping iron chain
So close that all appear'd one native vein.

From every quarter miracles arise, 205

And greet with wonder their astonish'd eyes.

Thence to the beauteous porch the twelve repair,

And find their lov'd and holy Master there,

Whom they, yet full of the prodigious sight,

To view the fabric ardently invite : 210

“ Seest thou these stones, these buildings, strong
and vast,

“ Sure these and time coevally will last ?”

To whom our Lord, with half-averted eyes,

Predicting ruin, pensively replies : 214

“ With such vain hopes no more yourselves deceive,

“ A fate approaches which you scarce believe.

“ Not one of those proud towers which heaven
invade,

“ Whose strong foundations in the rocks are laid,

they had need to have been firm, when, as Josephus tells us, lib. 7. cap. 9. “ the Romans were six days battering the
“ east galleries of the temple (with their prodigious rams),
“ but prevailed nothing against them. They then endeavoured to dig up the foundations ; but could only pull
“ out some of the outer stones with a great deal of fruitless labour.” He further tells us, that these stones were all fastened to each other by huge clamps of lead and iron ; I suppose he means, that the iron was soldered to them.

" But soon must kiss the dust—Not one of those
 " Prodigious stones which this huge pile compose,
 " Not one, but, by a force superior borne 221
 " From its old seat, from its strong brethren torn,
 " Must from these walls and firm foundations go,
 " And sink for ever in the vale below." 224

Struck with these dreadful truths they silent stood;
 Fear stopp'd their speech, and almost froze their
 blood.

Bold Cephas first reviv'd ; and as they went
 Their well-known way o'er Olivet's ascent 228
 Through the cool shades for pleasant Bethany,
 Presumes to ask when these dread things shall be ?

L. 221. *Not one ; but, by a force superior borne.* The Romans did at last prevail, and tore up the very foundations of the temple, ploughing the ground whereon it stood, which was performed by Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, left there by Titus for that purpose, on the nineteenth day of the month Abib, as says Maimonides ; so Eleazar afterwards in his speech to the Jews, when he exhorted them to kill themselves : " The temple," says he, " they have razed
 " to the very foundation, and hardly the memory thereof
 " is now left." And Josephus says, even of the city, that
 " it was beaten quite flat and plain to the ground ;" exactly according to our Saviour, " they shall lay thee even with
 " the ground, and thy children within thee."

- “ What sure prognostics their approach declare,
 “ And Christ’s in glory; that they might prepare? *
 “ What dreadful sights his kingdom should fore-
 show ? 233
 “ How they the world’s and temple’s end might
 know ?
 “ Whether these woes should be distinctly hurl’d,
 “ Or Salem buried in the ruin’d world ?” 236

Our Lord in silence paus’d, and, looking down,
 Survey’d with pity the devoted town :
 Intent he sat, and fix’d his labouring mind
 On gloomy scenes that crowded close behind ;
 Till, in a tide of undissembled woe, 241
 Words, tears, and sorrows, thus began to flow :

“ Ah, lost Jerusalem ! how much, how oft,
 Hast thou thy ruin, I thy welfare, sought !

* Matt. xxiv. 3.

L. 234. *How they the world’s and temple’s end might know ?*] They seem to confound them in their question, as if they supposed both should be together. And our Saviour’s answer does not, I think, as left recorded by any of the evangelists, *distinctly* separate them. The reason of which might be, to keep them more on their guard. In the following discourse of our Saviour, the reader will see that I have joined several of his prophecies, which we find in different places, expatiating as the subject led me.

Oft didst my prophets as impostors stone, 245
And shed their blood who came to save thy own.
Ev'n I the Heir, who left my native sky
To bring thee life, must like a felon die.
How oft would I thy wandering flocks have led
To crystal streams, and in rich pastures fed, 250
To thy base children my protection given
To shield their offspring from the wrath of Heaven!
As heat and strength the royal eagle brings,
And cherishes her young beneath her wings, 254
So should thy sons have my compassions prov'd,
The best protected, and the best lov'd.
But mercy's pleas and overtures are o'er,
Exhausted patience can contend no more;
Insulted Heaven that will no longer wait,
Inscribes thy ruin on the rolls of fate. 260
And you, my chosen few, who firm remain,
No sanguine dreams of pleasure entertain;
Keep clean your lamps, supply them well with oil,
Their light will shortly recompense your toil.

L. 253. *As heat and strength the royal eagle brings.*] So it is in Deuteronomy, whence this simile seems to be taken. Our translation indeed renders it *hen*; but the word ὄρνις will reach the other sense.

Be ever careful that these lights are clear; 265
No common darkness seems approaching near.
In that dread moment, when their woes shall come
To overwhelm these millions in one common tomb;
Myriads in sin must fall like those who fell
In Noah's dreadful flood, consign'd to hell :* 270
Some on rich carpets are supinely laid,
Luxurious some beneath their vineyard's shade;
Some in the markets toil for gain; and some
Their brides conduct in wanton triumph home:
All mock the prophet, and believe no more 275
The plague denounc'd a hundred years before.
Determin'd Heaven the fatal signal gave,
Convuls'd all nature, and the roaring wave
Rides foaming o'er the beach; new rivers flow
In earthquakes borne from frightful gulfs below;
While pitchy clouds a long-continued shower 281
From heaven's wide cataracts incessant pour;

* Matt. xxiv. 37.

L. 276. *The plague denounc'd a hundred years before.*]
The most natural sense of those words, Gen. vi. 3. "Yet
his days shall be an hundred and twenty years," seems to
be, that the world should have so much respite before its
destruction: which is favoured by St. Peter, in his reflec-
tion on God's long-suffering at that time. I say a hundred
because it is a round number.

O'er towers and hills th' impetuous floods arise;
Sweep the lewd earth, and vindicate the skies.—
So sudden shall the Son of man appear, 285
The change not less expected there than here :
The stupid world, who heedlessly regard
The threaten'd wrath, must suffer unprepar'd ;
But you, secure in my protection found,
Shall smile while worlds are perishing around; 290
From distant realms shall see the flames ascend,
And hail the lightnings which from heaven descend.

“ Meanwhile, impostors vilely shall pretend
To bear my name, but meet a fearful end ;
Shall raise commotions, and adherents find, 295
And practise wonders to deceive mankind.
In secret treasons many shall conspire,
And to the lonely wilderness retire
To form their plots, adjust their idle dreams, 299
Debate their subjects, and mature their schemes.
But these seducers shall in vain assail,
And die neglected like an idle tale.

L. 293. *Meanwhile, impostors vilely shall pretend.*] Josephus tells us of many of these false prophets before the destruction of Jerusalem.

For my descent shall in the skies appear,
Like day conspicuous, and like lightning clear.
But, first, for all the injuries prepare, 305
Which malice can inflict or virtue bear :
Hated by all, abus'd, contemn'd, betray'd,
My name and title shall your crimes be made.
Dragg'd to tribunals, hurried up and down, 309
Their kings shall judge you, and their princes frown.
Yet still intrepid face these daring foes,
For I, unseen, will vindicate your cause :
To me commit the care of your defence,
Safe in my power and your own innocence.
This all their pompous rhet'ric shall defeat, 315
And make them tremble on their judgment-seat ;
And greater reason have your foes to fear,
Their elevation proves their fall is near ;
My Blood and your's for just revenge will cry ;
And their's must flow, in part to satisfy. 320

L. 308. *My name and title shall your crimes be made.*] Indeed, their persecutors could find them guilty of no other crimes, and therefore made the very name their accusation. Hence the famous *Christianos ad Leones*, &c. —the Christians to the lions.

" The Roman armies not long hence shall come,
 And blazing torches light them to their doom ;
 Fierce war, its wasting squadrons scatt'ring wide,
 Shall o'er the guilty land triumphant stride ;
 Death, rapine, murder, shall compose its train, 325
 And proudly trample on the heaps of slain.
 Then tribe with tribe shall dreadfully engage,
 Excuse the common foe, and save their conqueror's
 rage.

Those left abroad, from these distractions free,
 Unhappy Solyma, shall flock to thee ; 330
 To thy proud turrets desolation bear
 With all the horrors of domestic war.
 The Romans then, with these successes crown'd,
 Thy three proud walls shall with a fourth surround.

L. 327. *Then tribe with tribe shall dreadfully engage.*] Galilee against Samaria and Judæa, Simon against John, &c. And the very words that Josephus makes Jesus use in his oration to the Idumæans against the Zealots are, " that
 " they rejoiced to see nation against nation."

L. 330. *Unhappy Solyma, shall flock to thee.*] If the Galilæan zealots had not fled to Jerusalem, Josephus thinks it might have been saved: but, alas ! Josephus knew not the real cause of its destruction.

L. 334. *Thy three proud walls shall with a fourth surround.*] The Romans not only cast up a trench, but even built a

Then, O my friends ! for safety urge your flight,
 And shun those scenes which must appal the sight.
 That moment fly, the next may be too late ; 337
 Fly, or prepare for your approaching fate.
 Flee those dire walls, let nothing court your stay ;
 To yon wild mountains press your rapid way. 340
 Forsake your fields, your houses deem a load,
 And drop your garments as you throng the road.

“ But first those vile profaners of your law,
 Whom favour'd Daniel's piercing eyes foresaw,
 The Holy Place with wicked arms shall seize,
 And fill with blood and piles of carcasses. 346
 Then guardian spirits shall their charge resign,
 And leave the temple, with a dreadful sign ;
 Leave, with a voice that chills the firmest heart,
 A voice that utters—“ *Let us hence depart.*” 350
 Scarce can those signals of the skies foreshow
 More dreadful plagues than those they feel below.
 Though high in heaven a bloody sword shall glare,
 A besom of destruction sweep the air,

wall round Jerusalem, to keep in the Jews ; after which no more could escape. Joseph. lib. 6. cap. 13.

L. 353. *Though high in heaven a bloody sword shall glare.*]
 Vid. Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. 5. cap. 12. where he says,
 “ a comet in the fashion of a fiery sword hung over the
 city for a year together, before the siege.”

Horses and chariots arm'd look ghastly down, 355
 And showers of blood stain all the guilty town ;
 Though thunders roll, and earthquakes rock the
 earth,

All big with woes just bursting into birth :
 All these, alas ! compar'd with what remains,
 Are but beginnings of acuter pains. 360
 Now famine enters on his horrid reign,
 Attended closely by a meagre train ;
 Expiring groans sound dreadful through each street,
 And starving citizens like ghosts shall meet,

L. 357. *Though thunders roll, and earthquakes rock the earth.*] Lib. 4. Cap. 7. He says, “when the Edomites
 “encamped by the walls of Jerusalem, there arose a terri-
 “ble tempest of wind, rain, lightning and thunder, with an
 “earthquake, and several very strange and dreadful voices.
 “Notwithstanding which, their friends within the gates
 “sawed the bars in sunder, and admitted them into the
 “city.”

L. 360. *Are but beginnings of acuter pains.*] Our Saviour
 says, “All these are but the beginning of sorrows.” And so
 it will appear to any one who reads the whole history.

L. 364. *And starving citizens like ghosts shall meet.*] John
 and Simon having, in their rage at one another, burnt the
 city granaries, containing enough to have supplied them for a
 long time, the famine soon raged among them : of which
 Josephus gives many terrible instances, Lib. 6. Cap. 11. &c.
 “The seditious,” says he, “in this famine, broke up houses
 “for corn and meat : if they found any, they beat persons

With sore amazement from each other fly, 365
 Walk, totter, pause, look round, fall down, and die.
 Though now you think a barren womb a curse,
 Woe to the mother then, and fruitful nurse.
 In those dread days, the parent shall become
 Her infant's murderer, coffin, and its tomb. 370
 The famish'd sons, in pangs of deep despair,
 Shall scanty morsels from their fathers tear:
 From them the ravening soldier—"Bread!" they cry;
 And those who gain it, only live to die.
 Within, sedition reigns; without, the foe; 375
 Above your towers, above your walls they go;
 This after that, each day, resistless win,
 And like a deluge pour their myriads in.

" for denying it; if none, for concealing it; if strong
 " and likely, they killed them, on a presumption that they
 " had some secret stores; if weak, because they would
 " soon die of themselves. Wives snatched the meat from
 " their husbands, children from parents, mothers from
 " infants; nay, one Miriam boiled and ate her own son.
 " Babes were dashed on the ground by the soldiers, when
 " found with meat in their mouths. The young men, pale
 " as ghosts, walked about till they dropped dead in the
 " streets; and some striving to bury others, fell dead over
 " them." And so he goes on with such a dreadful descrip-
 tion as shocks humanity to read it.

L. 378. *And like a deluge pour their myriads in.*] The
 end of it shall be with a flood, says Daniel; and accordingly
 it was universal and irresistible.

But all the conquests which their rage shall find,
Are those the plague and famine leave behind.
Yet, ah ! too many shall the sword devour, 381
The greedy sword. These from a half-burnt tower
The bold invaders of their walls defy,
And rush to death because they fear to die ;
Mad with despair, leap headlong from the wall,
And hope to kill a Roman by their fall. 386
Some seek the altar they profan'd before,
But find that refuge sacred now no more.
Here spouting blood the slippery pavement dyes,
And gilded roofs resound with human cries : 390
Swords, grinding swords, shall urge the barbarous
war,
And thin those ranks the famine deign'd to spare.
Nor shall these woes one gleam of hope afford ;
The torch shall follow the devouring sword,
Renew the war, and bid it fiercer rage, 395
While fiends and men and elements engage,
On death diffuse intolerable light,
And guide his shafts amid the gloom of night.
Thus shall these flames from dome to dome aspire,
And wrap the temple in consuming fire. 400

This fatal action, by a soldier done,
Shall quickly finish what the war begun ;
The sons of Zion heave a general groan,
And help the progress of destruction on, 404
Hear falling towers, and see those flames ascend
Which must their temple and its glories end,

L. 401. *This fatal action by a soldier done.*] Josephus says, " After they had been fighting many days about the temple, a certain soldier, contrary to the order of Titus, moved as it were with a certain divine fury, got some of his companions to help him up, and set fire to the temple, by one of the golden windows;" which happened on the 10th of August; the same day, he says, that it was burnt formerly by Nebuchadnezzar: the manner and circumstances whereof the historian describes like one who was no unconcerned spectator. He tells us, " Many, whose eyes were just closed with famine, got strength to bewail the temple as they saw it burning; and an innumerable multitude being killed about it, and in it, fixed their eyes thereon in the very agonies of death; whose dead bodies rolled down the temple-stairs in streams of blood. All was filled with dismal shrieks and lamentations, echoed by the mountains round the city. The hill of the temple now appeared all on fire, though there was blood enough shed to have quenched it; some of the priests being killed fighting, others leaping voluntarily into the flames, and the rest burnt alive, resolving not to survive the temple." Indeed, through the whole, Josephus has done it so admirably, that I am not ashamed to own I cannot reach him.

Thus flames and dying agonies aspire
Midst streams of blood which aim to quench the
fire.



Thus falls the city, to the Gentiles given,
A dread memorial of the wrath of Heaven: 410
Nor shall her sons these ruin'd walls regain,
Till time has clos'd their haughty conquerors' reign.

“ Meanwhile events, now ripening into birth,
Shall spread my doctrines through the spacious
earth. 414

What passes here, what we have done and said,
By men unborn shall be with raptures read.
To this great task four scribes will I assign,
And watchful Heav'n shall dictate every line,
Inscribe their records with sublimest thoughts,
And mark my followers' righteousness and faults.
From this great fountain, all my friends shall draw
Commands and precepts to enforce my law; 422
Unfold predictions lodg'd with safety there,
And, warm with ardour, bid mankind prepare;

L. 412. *Till time has clos'd their haughty conquerors' reign.*] From that of our Saviour till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Survey the end for which the earth was made, 425
 And scatter light on death's portentous shade.
 Nor will my followers soon a calm enjoy,
 Nor shall I soon my enemies destroy.
 Triumphant vice in other forms shall rise,
 Amaze the world, and emulate the skies. 430
 A rival monster rais'd, my seat shall claim,
 And in the church usurp my throne and name;
 Between the seas his hateful palace rear,
 And servile kings his pompous train shall bear;
 On seven proud mountains shall erect his seat,
 And prostrate throngs shall kiss his sinful feet.

L. 432. *And in the church usurp my throne and name.* }
 Our Saviour prophesies of those that should come in his
 name, saying, "I am Christ." So did some of the little Anti-
 christs, particularly Jonathan in Cyrene, who said express-
 ly, "Ego sum Messias, I am the Christ." But this was to be
 eminently and remarkably fulfilled in the ὁ ἀντιχρίστος, ,
 or ἀντίχριστος , the great adversary, or Antichrist. And that
 some such is foretold in the scriptures, Bellarmine himself,
 and all the Papists, believe. He then that usurps the throne,
 the power, the very divinity, of our Saviour, wherever we
 find him, must be Antichrist. This the Pope does: it is
 his throne; for he is carried by his slaves, after he is chosen,
 placed upon the high altar, and there actually adored.
 His power; for he undertakes to forgive sins, and rule
 kings and nations with a rod of iron. His divinity; for, not
 content with being the vicar of Christ, his flatterers have
 given him the very name and power of God.

Those who refuse t'obey this impious See,
Shall find those pains the Jews reserve for me.
By tortures, poisons, inquisitions, fire, 439
Unnumber'd thousands must in groans expire.
Yet these, unvanquish'd, shall obtain the grace
To join the martyrs of my chosen race:
These, on my coming, shall triumphant rise,
And with their Master reascend the skies;
Shall see the flames on mystic Babel hurl'd, 445
And watch the conflagration of the world."

"He paus'd: but having these great truths
express'd,

Their speaking eyes continued their request.
He read their hearts, nor for confession sues,
And thus the same important theme pursues: 450
"The world for faithful souls was chiefly made,
And for the church the fate of states is sway'd:
Who guards them, stands; but such as dare oppose,
Shall basely fall before ignoble foes.
For know that Heaven's celestial legions stand,
And wait the signal of their Lord's command. 456
These o'er the empires of the world preside,
And these the turns of mighty nations guide;

These shall my lambs midst ravening wolves defend,
Protect the righteous, and their cause befriend; 460
Mark such as treat them with contempt and hate,
And in due time administer their fate.

Then hoary time, descending down the hill,
Shall all the ancient prophecies fulfil. 464

That wond'rous image, through prophetic light
Which Daniel saw in visions of the night,
Whose iron legs were join'd to feet of clay,
Declines apace, and verges to decay.

The mystic stone cut from the mountain's side,
Shall all their schemes of policy divide; 470

The lifeless trunk and limbs to powder grind,
And lift their ashes to the warring wind.

Another beast, predicted from afar,
Already lives, and wastes the world with war.

Unrivall'd fierceness marks the Roman power, 475
Whose jaws expanded trembling realms devour.

Satan this power will to his side engage,
And you must grapple with their common rage.

What fiends and men, what arts and arms can do,
Your sons must meet, but they shall conquer too.

Ten furious imps of this infernal brood 481
 Shall dye their purple in your guiltless blood ;
 With tortures, axes, and devouring flame,
 Wreak all their malice on the Christian name ;
 To unknown torments give detested birth, 485
 To drive religion from the guilty earth.
 But on their crimes impending vengeance waits,
 And barb'rous nations shall besiege their gates ;
 Their tow'ring glories in the dust must fall,
 And Cesar's name be blotted from the ball. 490

“ The first in vice who shall mankind disgrace,
 And scourge his country and my holy race,
 His mother's womb this impious wretch shall tear,
 And sword and fire nor age nor sex shall spare ;

L. 481. *Ten furious imps of this infernal brood.*] Alluding to the ten persecutions.

L. 492. *And scourge his country and my holy race.*] Nero was the wretch who stirred up the first persecution against the christians, which occasioned that sharp and just remark of Tertullian ; “ Non nisi grande aliquod bonum quod à Nerone damnatum,” “ It must needs be some extraordinary good thing if Nero condemned it.” This monster was justly voted by the senate a parricide, and an enemy of mankind ; and accordingly his memory has been ever detested by all men, except by the Parthians and a few other heathens.

In flames and murders his delights shall glow ; 495
He lives detested as his country's foe,
And dies abandon'd by that bleeding land
Which plac'd the sceptre in his impious hand.
But all the tortures fancy ever drew,
In all their forms, shall be reserv'd for you ; 500
Sinear'd with asphaltos by this gen'ral foe,
To light the city to behold your woe,
Transform'd to torches you in flames must burn,
And leave your ashes in the moving urn.
But vengeance shall this parricide attend ; 505
His impious hand his wicked life shall end.
The world shall smile at this infernal blow,
And Nero sink to endless flames below.

“ He who with Heaven shall next renew the
fight,

Shall see his brother give mankind delight ; 510

L. 503. *Transform'd to torches you in flames must burn.*] Nero hung up numerous christians pitched, or otherwise prepared, instead of lamps, and burned them alive in this situation.

L. 510. *Shall see his brother give mankind delight.*] Domitian, who raised the second persecution, was one of the foulest of men (some think worse than Nero) ; and as much detested as his brother Titus was beloved ; who was stiled, as all literary men know, “ *Deliciæ humani generis,*” the delight of mankind.

But view himself abandon'd and despis'd,
 By mortals hated, and by devils priz'd;
 Yet this aspiring fiend a god would be,
 Compos'd of falsehood, lust, and blasphemy.
 If in his race there ought remain of good, 515
 Jealous, by martyrdom he'll purge his blood:
 His wife in exile must resign her fame,
 His kindred perish for the Christian name.
 Then thou, my *friend*, from distant Asia borne,
 Shalt feel his rage, and suffer from his scorn: 520
 Though plung'd in flaming oil, thou needst not fear,
 The Saviour's arms with succour shall be near; *
 Secure in these, thou shalt serenely smile,
 When basely banish'd to a desert isle: †
 There will I meet thee, there again relate 525
 The churches' travels, and opposers' fate.
 But this proud foe shall from his throne be hurl'd,
 To face the judgment of another world:

* Vid. Dan. iii. 25.

† Rev. i. 9—13.

L. 516. *Jealous, by martyrdom he'll purge his blood.*] History tells us, that he murdered Flavius Clemens, his near kinsman, and banished his wife Flavia, for being Christians.

L. 528. *To face the judgment of another world.*] Stabbed by Parthenius and Stephanus: See the celebrated history of this event in Apollonius's life.

His successor shall then our friends release,
And bid mankind enjoy a transient peace. 530

“ But this calm season will unhappy prove ;
My friends, grown careless, will withhold their love ;
Heretic teachers will assume the pen,
And teach for doctrines the commands of men ;
Devour like wolves, and, disregarding God, 535
Deny the Lord who bought them with his blood.
To bold dominion some will then aspire,
With zeal enkindled at unholy fire ;
Replace those spears which Nerva lately broke,
And light that torch which still appears to smoke.
The mystic field will then purgations need, 541
And these purgations quickly shall succeed.
The storm which comes on this tremendous day,
Shall sift the wheat, but sweep the tares away ;
While he who reigns, and wields the mighty rod
Of injur'd Heaven and an avenging God, 546

L. 529. *His successor shall then our friends release.*] Nerva, who, by an edict, recalled the christians from banishment ; and among the rest St. John ; though some would fain have him dead a great many years before, and others that he never died.

L. 536. *Deny the Lord who bought them with his blood.*] Ebion, Cerinthus, and other heretics, who first denied the divinity of our Saviour ; against whom St. John wrote his gospel.

Shall hear in death his dying courtiers groan,
And in their fate anticipate his own ;
See earthquakes yawn, and, watching the event,
Receive from Heaven this signal to repent. 550

“ Beneath his frown who Trajan shall succeed,
Your sons again in crowds must burn and bleed.
But chiefly Jews, by their false Christ betray’d,
Whose impious vauntings to destruction lead,
Shall from the tyrant feel afflictive pain, 555
And mourn their cities smoking on the plain.
They die rebellious ; you, though guiltless, fall ;
Nor shall your blood in vain for vengeance call.
Plagues urg’d on plagues your enemy shall seize,
Who in despair shall fly to death for ease ; 560

L. 549. *See earthquakes yawn, and, watching the event.*] Trajan, who began the third persecution. The dire event here mentioned is that of the earthquake at Antioch ; where, the emperor being then present and a vast conflux of people, the earth opened, and devoured an incredible number of men ; one of the Consuls perishing, and the emperor himself with difficulty escaping.

L. 553. *But chiefly Jews, by their false Christ betray’d.*] Adrian, who began the fourth persecution, burnt thousands of the towns of the Jews, for rebelling against him under their false Christ, Barcochab ; (to whom Rabbi Akiba was a sort of Elias, crying, *Hic est Rex ille Messias—This is that King Messias ;*) and killed 50,0000 men, then re-edifying Jerusalem, &c.

Attempt to soothe his "*fluttering soul*" in vain,
Reserv'd by God to feel acuter pain.

The king of terrors shall elude his grasp,
And mock his anguish to the latest gasp;
That to the world through Adrian may be given
The signal vengeance of insulted Heaven. 566

"He who succeeds, shall these barbarians tame
And with true virtue ornament his name;
The suff'ring empire of your God restore,
And punish those who tortur'd you before. 570

"A vain philosopher shall next supply
The vacant throne, and then the just must die,

L. 561. *Attempt to soothe his "fluttering soul" in vain.*] Being sick of a languishing distemper, he would often have killed himself, but was hindered by his friends. A little before his death, he is said to have made those pretty foolish verses, "*Animula, vagula, blandula,*" &c. to which *fluttering soul* alludes.

L. 567. *He who succeeds, shall these barbarians tame.*] Antoninus Pius, who, on Justin's apology, made an edict, that Christians should not be punished, but those who accused them; as Orosius in his history informs us.

L. 571. *A vain Philosopher shall next supply.*] Antoninus Philosophus began the fifth persecution, stirred up by Crescens the Cynic, and continued it with great fury; till being distressed in his war with the Quadi for want of water, and obtaining both that and victory by the prayers of a Christian legion, he ordered it to be stopped.

Till God from heaven, in answer to their prayer,
Shall give him vict'ry, and his army spare;
Then to my servants he his life shall owe, 575
And with reluctance tardy peace bestow.
Thus did Elisha three great monarchs save, *
And snatch their armies from one common grave,
Supply their wants in an auspicious night,
And put the myriads of their foes to flight. 580
This a still fiercer tyrant knows in vain;
Swift moves his fate, nor has he long to reign;
His wicked offspring, barbarous and lewd,
Shall kill each other, and revenge your blood.

“ The next a wolf, who, the mild shepherd
slain, 585

By fraud and treason shall the empire gain ;

* 2 Kings iii.

L. 581. *This a still fiercer tyrant knows in vain.*] Septimus Severus, who raised the sixth persecution, under whom so many were martyred, that some thought him Antichrist. His two sons, Bassianus and Geta, succeeded him; the elder of whom killed the younger in his mother's arms.

L. 585. *The next a wolf, who, the mild shepherd slain.* Referring to the seventh persecution under Maximin, who murdered the good emperor Alexander Severus; and was himself killed, together with his son, by his own soldiers at the siege of Aquileia.

Though keen his rage, his time will soon be o'er,
His name and kindred shall be known no more ;
His angry soldiers shall the wretch displace,
And ease the world of his inhuman race. 590

“ The next whom guilt and punishment attend,
Shall sink in war by an untimely end.

“ With Heaven and you another will engage,
Vain, cruel, old, and dreadful in his rage.
He for your sons shall racks and stakes prepare,
And raise up gibbets in the yielding air; 596
Inflict unnumber'd torments, and survive
To feel the pangs of being flay'd alive.

“ These nine fierce waves in vain already gone,
The tenth, uniting all their force, comes on. 600

L. 591. *The next whom guilt and punishment attend.*] Decius, who raised the eighth persecution ; whose son was killed by the Goths, and himself drowned in the fens near the Danube, as he fled from the enemy.

L. 594. *Vain, cruel, old, and dreadful in his rage.*] Valerian, the author of the ninth persecution, at the instigation of an Egyptian magician. He was afterwards conquered and taken by Saporess the emperor of Persia, who made use of his back to mount his horse ; and when he refused that office, flayed him alive, and covered him with salt.

Two monsters shall the groaning world divide,
And rule with equal cruelty and pride.

Satan inflam'd with malice and despair,

Shall range the earth because his fall is near:

He knows the nations will his gods despise, 605

And tear his banners, that the cross may rise:

Their vainly thund'ring Jove himself, and all

Their helpless fry of spurious gods, must fall;

And then the conquering stone shall claim the
capitol.

“When to their doom these tyrants shall repair,
My blessed champion * shall the purple wear; 611
Then shall those men his throne and honours share,
Whose prayers to heaven, and arms, had fix'd
him there.

See him the servants of his God embrace,

And by his royal side in triumph place. 615

His eyes with transport shall unenvied see

Those glorious scars they wear for truth and me;

L. 601. *Two monsters shall the groaning world divide.*]
Dioclesian and Maximinian.

L. 610. *When to their doom these tyrants shall repair.*]
Dioclesian, some say, poisoned himself; Maximinian abdicated, but, being caught plotting against Constantine, was hanged for his reward.

* Constantine the Great.

Of evils past almost the trace remove,
And bless his people with his pious love.
Thus much of good can one good monarch do,
And peace shall favour those who favour you. 621
Yet still the signs of ancient fraud remain;
Still shall the lust of empire and of gain
Distract the world, nor yet my destin'd sway
Relume creation with its genial ray. 625
Reproach will come, and in my church arise
Base ministers who will my name despise.
But steady vengeance shall the world pursue,
And future ills reward the crimes they do.
Fierce Magog's sons shall in the east embrace 630
A cursed law with Ishmael's wand'ring race;
While all the West a fiercer tyrant spoils,
Diffusing poison through the neighbouring isles.
Nay, the unhappy gangrene shall disperse
Its dire contagion round the universe.
This catholic mischief widely will prevail,
And stars that fall display the dragon's tail:
This monster will terrestrial kings dethrone, *
And, leagu'd, with devils, reign supreme alone;
The God of heaven with blasphemies oppose, 640
Defy his power and abrogate his laws;

* Rev. xii. 4.

And he who dares arraign these curs'd deeds,
 Dies by the axe, or at the faggot bleeds.
 But first, what *lets* must be remov'd away,
 Rome's stately glories must in dust decay ; 645
 Then shall this name of blasphemies arise,
 And hurl defiance to the distant skies ;
 Flatt'ry and murder shall his title gain,
 And arts and arms that title shall maintain.
 He, though debauch'd, shall abstinence enjoin,
 And basely aim to frustrate God's design ; 651
 Marriage with him shall criminal be grown,
 While lusts of Sodom shall be all his own.
 Long shall he reign ; but when he sits on high,
 Sits most secure of fate, his fall is nigh.* 655
 Meanwhile a swan in Gomer's fields will rise,
 Who shall his laws, as he does mine, despise.
 Repenting kings shall then abhor the whore, †
 And spurn indignant what they lov'd before.

L. 644. *But first, what lets must be remov'd away.*] This
 the ancient Christians interpreted of the Roman empire.
 See *Thess. ii. 7.*

* *Rev. xviii. 7, 8.*

L. 656. *Meanwhile a swan in Gomer's fields will rise.*)
 It is said in the history of John Huss, that at his martyrdom
 he prophesied of a swan which should rise a hundred years
 after, whom the Papists should not be able to burn.

† *Rev. xvii. 16.*

Then shall this power contemptible be made, 660
And shame impel its vices to the shade;
My sword full drawn shall give new epochs birth,
My thunder drive corruption from the earth
Then shall the just their promis'd kingdom gain,
And then the saints of the Most High shall reign.*

“ If more you ask,—the day, the hour precise,
When I appear? my Father this denies.
The mystery from angels is conceal'd,
Nor to the Son himself as man reveal'd † ;
Since, if remote, it might relax your care; 670
If near, might sink you into deep despair:
Your constant duty is to watch and pray,
And thus prepare against the judgment-day.

“ Come, learn a parable—Ten virgins fair ‡
Together liv'd; no matter when or where! 675
One half were prudent, arm'd against surprise;
The other five were rather fair than wise.
A princely bridegroom did these ten invite
To grace his partner on their nuptial night.
With secret transport every bosom glow'd 680
To seize the honours which the prince bestow'd :

* Dan. vii. 18. † Mark xiii. 32. ‡ Matt. xxv. 1—13.

To quit their dwellings all with speed prepare,
And take their lamps to greet the blushing fair.
Five, with their lamps, took purest oil in store ;
Five bask'd in day, and thought of nothing more ;
All, thus equipp'd, proceed with one design, 686
The grand procession of their prince to join.
They travell'd long, but saw no bridegroom near,
Nor any news of his approach could hear.
Night hasten'd on, and fogs began to rise, 690
And dews descended from the fading skies ;
The gath'ring clouds unwholesome vapours show'd,
And darkness cover'd their intended road.
To shun these ills the virgin guests repair 694
To a friend's mansion which they knew was near :
It join'd the margin of that public road
Their friends must tread, and they had lately trod.
On entering here, to cheat the tardy hours,
Each spreads his store of intellectual powers,
Descants on holiness, its laws explains, 700
Or marks those actions which must end in pains.

L. 695. *To a friend's mansion which they knew was near.*] Some such thing seems implied from the œconomy of the parable : for it is said in the 1st verse, “ they actually went forth to meet the bridegroom.” But ver. 5. “ while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept ;” which they cannot be supposed to have done in the open air. But the reader must spiritualize the whole.

“The trembling moon had measur’d half the skies,
And sleep had seiz’d and seal’d their weary eyes ;
Their careless limbs were on the couches laid,
When through the midnight air a cry was made—
“ *The bridegroom comes:*” dull night repeats the
 sound,

And frighted sleep unlock'd the sense he drown'd.
Not quite awake the virgins quit their bed ;
All trim their lamps, and midnight darkness fled ;
Those fed with oil diffus'd a flood of light, 710
And shot new day across the gloom of night.
Nor light nor oil in theirs the others find,
Extinguish'd fire had left a cloud behind ;
Recruits for both they from the wise entreat,
But ask a favour that appear'd too great. 715
These to the merchants sent them, there to buy
For all their wants an adequate supply ;
Then join'd the train which mov'd in solemn state,
And found a welcome at the Bridegroom's gate.

“ Meanwhile, the others, who in darkness stray’d,
Found with regret their quick return delay’d.
In vain they wander’d in pursuit of shops,
For disappointment murder’d all their hopes.
At length resolv’d, they to the feast repair
To join the guests in darkness as they were; 725

The gates were shut as they approach'd the street,
And nought but dangers and affronts they meet.
Clam'rous and loud, when shut the gates they
found,

With knocks and calls they make the walls
resound;

Till from his seat, disturb'd, the Bridegroom rose,
And to the sounding gates in anger goes, 731
Sternly demanding what unwelcome guest
At this ill hour intruded on the feast?

Forward and bold, they answer, "Lord, they're we,
" By thee invited, and well known to thee. 735
" Prepar'd and ready at thy gate we stand,
" And ask admittance, but in vain demand :
" But since our friend, our lord, our prince is here,
We can no longer an admission fear."

The lord rejoins, " The time for that is o'er ; 740
" And, gone for ever, will return no more ;
" Your names henceforth must be unknown to me,
" And utter darkness must your portion be."
Learn hence this moral—"Watch, and be prepar'd;
" Your devious paths let circumspection guard ;
" For in an hour no human wisdom knows, 746
" The trump of God shall banish your repose ;

“ And, if abandon’d to unclean desire,
“ The Judge will doom you to eternal fire.”

Pleas’d with the things their gracious Saviour
said, 750

Their speaking gestures urg’d him to proceed.
He mark’d the latent strugglings of their breast,
And thus indulg’d their wishes unexpress’d.

“ A lord there was whose business call’d him far *
From his abode, for commerce, peace, or war, 755
No matter which ;—but his estate was large,
Which he committed to his servants’ charge.
Their various turns for merchandize he knew,
And estimated what they all could do.
To one five talents to improve he gives ; 760
Another two, another one receives.
Soon as their lord had this division made,
He took his leave, and left them to their trade.
He who had five, did other five obtain ;
And he with two receiv’d proportion’d gain. 765
He who had one, receiv’d that one for nought ;
For to obey his Lord, he never sought.
Instead of trading to increase his hoard,
He hid the talent of his absent Lord ;

* Matt. xxv. 14—30.

Then, freed from care, (for sloth alone would please,)
He basely slumber'd in inglorious ease.

“ Soon as their lord return'd from foreign lands,
He from his servants their accounts demands.
The two, with joy, their righteous master meet,
And humbly lay their profits at his feet. 775
Well pleas'd, he views them with a kind regard,
And smiles on each, and gives a great reward.
With conscious guilt that mark'd his sullen face,
The third, approaching with an aukward grace,
Upbraids his master in a wicked strain, 780
As proud, rapacious, insolent, and vain.
“ I knew my master, long before he went,
“ A hard exacter of the sums he lent,
“ Severe and cruel, that, from other's pains,
“ Expected large and disproportion'd gains. 785
“ How could I then propose myself to save,
“ If trade had robb'd me of the sums he gave?
“ With these distracting thoughts I struggling lay,
“ But fix'd at last, and took the safest way.
“ His talent I entrusted to the ground, 790
“ And there the same may be in specie found.
“ I have no int'rest, but present him all,
“ Each mite, each farthing, of the principal.”

To him his lord, whose eyes with anger burn,
In terms of justice made this quick return: 795
“ Ungrateful servant ! by thy crimes betray’d,
“ To truth a stranger, and to justice dead ;
“ If from the toils of others I require
“ The gains of trade, it is a just desire.
“ To prove this truth, behold these facts combine,
“ The harvest, reapers, and the field are mine.
“ Nor are these deeds rapacious or severe, 802
“ My ways unequal, or my mind austere ;
“ I broke the glebe, the teeming furrow plough’d,
“ Reap where I sow’d, and gather what I strow’d ;
“ Gave to my servants property to trade,
“ And only ask what they receiv’d and made.
“ I do no more ; thy own attesting heart
“ Shall to these truths its evidence impart.
“ If these be crimes, then civil life must fail, 810
“ And desolating anarchy prevail.
“ Know then, vile wretch, who durst arraign thy
 lord,
“ He draws thy sentence from thy lips and word.
“ For were he such as thou wouldst represent,
“ Exacting more than he advanc’d or lent, 815
“ He would expect, returning from afar,
“ The utmost int’rest that his wealth would bear ;

“ And punish him, too indolent to toil,

“ Who hid his talent in the lifeless soil.

“ Thy riches therefore are of right convey’d 820

“ To him who five to twice five talents made :

“ As to thyself, my servants thee this night

“ Shall, like thy talent, hide from cheering light ;

“ Thou shalt in dungeons bound, and fetter’d there,

“ For ever mourn in darkness and despair.” 825

“ But if these truths, you, more distinct and
clear,

Without a parable desire to hear,

Attend while I these dreadful scenes display,

And paint the progress of the judgment-day..

“ Know then, my friends, a dreadful day will
come, 830

To light all nature to her flaming tomb :

Though wrapp’d in secret from all finite eyes,

In God’s arcana all its horrors rise.

Before it comes, some signals shall appear,

And certain signs prognosticate it near. 835

My great archangel, clad in armour bright, *

Shall sound his trumpet, and the world affright..

* 1 Thess. iv. 16.

The piercing call so terribly shall sound
Through trembling nature's universal round,
That earth convuls'd, and the dissolving sky, 840
Shall mourn their fate, and lay them down to die.
But deathless man, whose millions shall survive,
Must quit his grave, in joy or pain to live :
From mould'ring coffins every slumb'ring guest
Shall leave for ever his abode of rest ; 845
The clust'ring atoms, which an age before
Floated in air, or waves, or press'd the shore,
From their strange mansions shall embodied rise,
And move through flames which bury earth and
skies.

But ah ! how diff'rent will the race appear, 850
From what they seem when we survey them here !
The just shall smile, and, cloth'd in glory, shine ;
The guilty shriek, and sink from wrath divine.

“ That radiant orb, whose webs of light disperse
Their golden fibres through the universe, 855
Loose from his centre must unbalanc'd roll,
And by his fall unhinge the steady pole ;
Refund that light which now dispenses day,
Or gently melt in fiercer fires away.

Ten thousand suns must join in his disgrace, 860
Or wander lawless through th' abyss of space.
The lunar sphere, congeal'd to seas of blood,
Shall dreadful ruin on the world obtrude:
Heaps pil'd on heaps, orbs shall on orbs be hurl'd,
Chaos with chaos mix'd, and world with world.
If then the whole be not from doom secure, 866
What dreadful ravage must this part endure!
As when the deluge cover'd every shore,
And form'd that chaos earth had felt before,
When heaven and earth did both their oceans join,
And with the fountains of the deep combine, 871
Made heaving waves in liquid mountains come,
And seas boil up from her hydropic womb:
So from the sources whence that deluge came,
Oceans of fire shall teem with waves of flame.
Thus by God's vengeance cursed Sodom fell, 876
Thus burns creation a terraqueous hell
From earth's wide womb large floods of flame shall
flow,
And fires above unite with those below:

L. 860. *Ten thousand suns must join in his disgrace.*
According to their notion, who think all fixed stars suns.

Thence all the righteous, when prepar'd for flight,
Shall safely soar to worlds of calmer light. 881

While those polluted with unpardon'd sin,
Must writhe in groans, and all their woes begin.

But first that sentence they deserve so well

Must fix their station, and describe their hell ;

And when the fiat of the Judge is pass'd, 886

Their raging torments must for ever last.

“ High in the midst shall my tribunal stand,

With seers, apostles, saints on my right hand.

Martyrs and confessors, the glorious train 890

Who suffer here, shall with their Saviour reign.

While on the left a dismal gloomy band

Of haughty tyrants and their flatt'ers stand ;

Unfeeling misers, liars, and profane,

And those whose swords have fill'd the world with
slain ; 895

Lewd priests, apostate poets who disgrace

Their high descent, and stain their heaven-born
race ;

Lean hypocrites, who, with deceitful prayer,

Obtain damnation with unwearied care :

But know there will not be an Atheist there. 900

“ Arrang’d in order, and distinctly seen,
To you, with smiles, your Saviour will begin :
“ Come, by my Father most supremely bless’d ;
“ Come, holy souls, to endless peace and rest.
“ For some short years of misery and pain, 905
“ In light and joy begin an endless reign,
“ In that bless’d place before all worlds prepar’d
“ By heavenly skill, by hands Almighty rear’d,
“ You in that world yourselves have faithful shewn,
“ And those who own’d me there, I here will own;
“ You saw me hungry, and you then reliev’d ; 911
“ And, parch’d with thirst, your favours I receiv’d ;
“ You saw me wand’ring, and you entertain’d,
“ Nor was my naked poverty disdain’d ;
“ Sick, and imprison’d, you caress’d your friend,
“ And to my wants did your assistance lend.”

“ With modest joy the righteous will reply,
While grateful tears will start in every eye ;
“ Thy merits, Lord, not virtues of our own,
“ Must place thy servants on thy radiant throne :
“ Unnumber’d failings mark’d our ways below, 921
“ But deeds like these remembrance cannot shew.

“ When was our Lord with food or drink reliev’d ?
“ Or when was clothing from our hands receiv’d ?
“ When did we see thee struggling with disease,
“ Or from the fetters of the jail release ?”

To this your Judge and Saviour will rejoïn,
“ Those generous favours I accounted mine,
“ Which on my suffering members were bestow’d
“ From ardent zeal for your insulted God : 930
“ These deeds the annals of these realms record ;
“ Go then, and reign with your triumphant Lord.”

“ Then turning to the guilty crowds, who wait
Their too well known intolerable fate,
While justice frowns on that tremendous brow
Which melts in tears, or smiles in mercy *now*, 936
And kindly offers to remit their sins,
With solemn aspect thus the Judge begins :

“ Go, ye accurs’d, to endless torments go,
“ And writhe in groans in endless worlds of woe ;
“ In fires prepar’d when rebel Angels fell ;
“ You shar’d their crimes, and must partake their
hell.

“ By you, unkindness in the world was shown ;
“ You there disown’d me, here I you disown ;

" My hunger there neglected to relieve, 94
 " Nor did you even a cup of water give.
 " You saw me wand'ring, and express'd disdain,
 " Scorn'd my condition, and despis'd my pain ;
 " With stripes you cloth'd me, scorn'd my plaintive
 tale, 94
 " Gave stones for bread, and lodg'd me in a jail."

" With all the haste of impudent despair
 These sons of vice will ask me, " When and
 where ?"
 To them my answer, like the last, shall be,
 " The wrongs my servants felt, I view as done
 me." 95

" A place there is from heavenly light debarr'd
 Where dismal shrieks of guilty souls are heard ;
 Loud yells, deep groans, thick stripes, long clank
 of chains,
 Where solid everlasting darkness reigns ;

L. 951. *With all the haste of impudent despair.*] The
 shorten our Saviour's accusation; and say, ver. 44. " Lord
 when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger
 or naked," &c. whereas the righteous are more deliberate
 ver. 37. "When saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee," &c.

Where raging fire that on the wretched feeds,
No new supplies of sulphurous matter needs ; 960
Where hope refuses her consoling ray,
And change of torment measures night and day.
Hither the damn'd, with fallen Angels driven,
Shall quit the precincts, and be shut from heaven.
Tormentors and tormented, deep they fall, 965
And, from the ruins of this burning ball,
By storms of flame on waves of sulphur toss'd,
In that tremendous gulf shall be for ever lost.

“ Then shall the righteous with their Lord
ascend
To worlds of glory which exclude an end. 970
Know then, this place is far remov'd away
From yonder lamp which makes this mortal day ;
This blissful place unknown to clouds of night,
Sustains his throne who scatters endless light.
There angels live ; and saints so far refin'd, 975
Shall feel their bodies glorious as their mind.
There genuine friendship, by the world profess'd,
Shall be matur'd, acknowledg'd, and possess'd ;
Glow into raptures, fill the soul with bliss,
And swell the tide of finite happiness ; 980

Employ their tongues, their mental powers improve,
To speak with transports of the God they love.
Here they shall dwell, and constantly enjoy
Consummate glory, free from all alloy,
In seats of bliss unutterable plac'd, 985
And be for ever by their God embrac'd."

Here, as the Saviour ended his discourse,
The twelve sat mute, reflecting on its force.
The joys of heaven, the torments of the
 damn'd,
Which the Redeemer had describ'd, and nam'd,
Reviv'd their spirits, but alarm'd their fear, 990
With bliss and sufferings both remote and near.
The latent pangs which labour'd in their breast,
When worlds unseen stood visibly express'd,
The inward conflict of their souls unveils 995
With such emotions as the writer feels.

O grant, just Heaven, when time shall cease to
 last,
And future worlds shall retrospect the past,
Grant, that thy servant may approach that shore
Where pain and anguish shall be felt no more.

In that dread moment, when the darts of death
Shall change these scenes, and stop this fleeting
breath,

Oh ! may his spirit, previously prepar'd,

Exult with joy to meet its great reward ;

Forsake the shadows at the signal giv'n, 1005

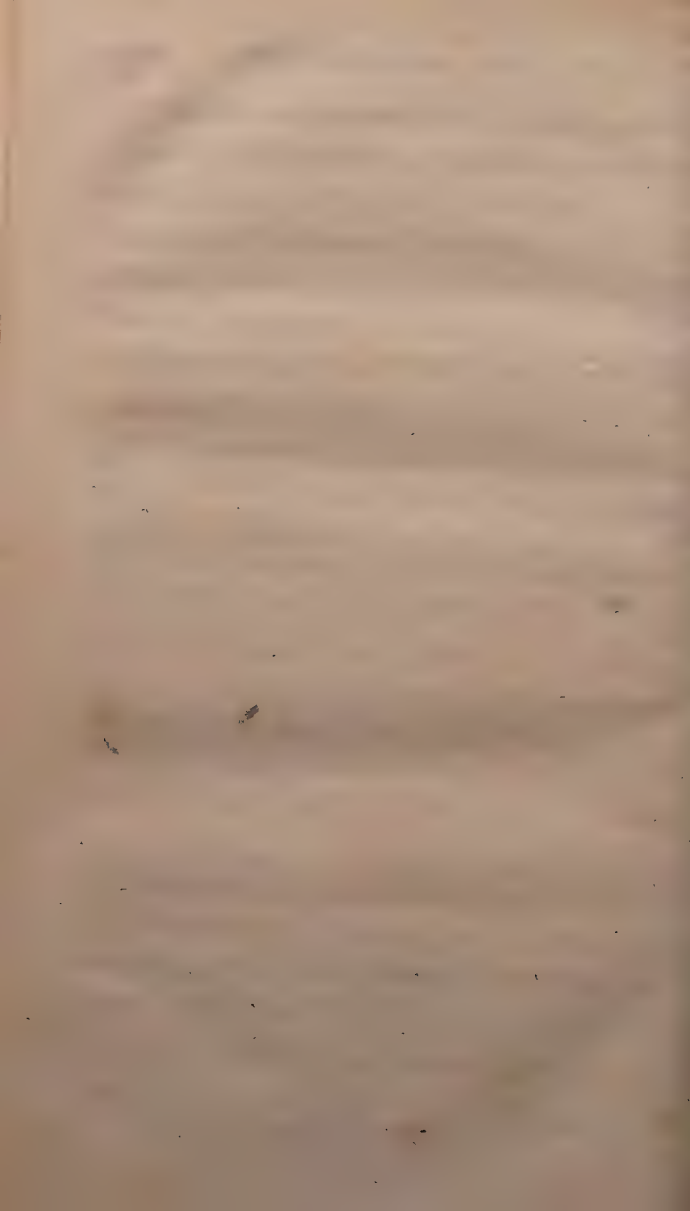
And mount triumphant to the gates of heaven.

And when that trumpet which the guilty dread,

Shall wake to life the millions of the dead,

Refin'd for glory may his body rise, 1009

To swell that throng which shall ascend the skies.



CONTENTS

OF THE

EIGHTH BOOK.

A Catalogue of the nations that came to the pass-over, together with the inhabitants of the holy land. Herod's entry and train from Galilee. Our Saviour privately comes thither with his disciples, sending St. Peter and St. John before him, to prepare the passover; but could not remain undiscovered, some Greeks from Athens having heard of his fame, and pressing to see him; which having obtained by the assistance of some Tyrian Merchants of Philip's acquaintance, God the Father, at Christ's desire, attests him now the third time by a voice from Heaven; at which the people being again ready to force a kingdom upon him, he retires with his disciples. However, his fame and doctrine spread so far, that all things were now at a crisis, and the whole nation was upon the point of owning him the Messiah: at which Lucifer, being alarm'd, takes with him a detachment of Devils, and flies to earth; where, sending the rest to their appointed posts, to facilitate his design, he himself enters the palace of Caiaphas; and, night being now come, and the High Priest asleep, appears before him in the form of old Hircanus, chiding him

for his remissness, and stirring him up to destroy our Saviour: in order to which, as soon as he awakes Caiaphas sends privately to assemble the Sanhedrim which being known to Gamaliel, Joseph, and Nicodemus they hasten thither likewise. Caiaphas's speech to the Sanhedrim against our Saviour, accusing him as a subverter of their laws; pretending to prove, that he was not, for that reason, to be hearkened unto, though he wrought miracles; complaining of the meanness of his doctrine on one side, obliging to forgive enemies, and of the impracticable heights on the other, not admitting liberty of thoughts, or the first motions of desire or anger; with other objections usually urged by the deists against Christianity. After which he rises higher, charges him with blasphemy; and at last, entering into the prophetic spirit, he declares, that it was necessary one man should die for the whole nation; urging that that could not be a sin which God himself had decreed. His speech variously received by the Sanhedrim. Nicodemus stands up, and begins cautiously to answer him; whom Joseph of Arimathea interrupts, and boldly, before them all, confesses Jesus; distinctly answering all the cavils Caiaphas against his person and laws, and pressing the Sanhedrim to receive him as their true Messiah. While they were divided in their opinions, and debating the matter, our Saviour celebrates the passover with his twelve disciples, and institutes the sacrament of his last supper, foreshowing and describing the traitor Judas, who went out from the rest with a resolution to betray him; whose offer to the Sanhedrim was agreed to by the majority, and preparations made to apprehend Jesus. Our Lord comfort

the remaining disciples, but prophecies of their forsaking him, and particularly Peter's denial. Thence he leads them to Gethsemane; and takes Peter, James, and John with him into the thickest part of the garden, leaving the rest at the gate. His agonies and prayers, not for fear of the approaching pain or infamy, but of his Father's anger. An angel appears to strengthen him. A comparison of him with the most famous ancient heroes, shewing how far he exceeded them in patience and virtue. The three disciples asleep for sorrow. Judas, having received guards from the High Priest, comes to the garden, and, with a kiss, betrays our Lord; who being apprehended, after he had healed Malchus, whom Peter had wounded, all his disciples forsake him. He is carried to the High Priest's palace, and there abused by the guards and rabble. John, who soon resumed courage, followed our Saviour, and owned himself his disciple. Peter comes after, though with more fear; but being known to some of the company, and charged as a follower of Jesus, he thrice denies him, the last time with curses and imprecations; till, on our Saviour's looking back upon him, he returns to himself, and, departing from the palace, most deeply repents. Our Saviour is accused by Caiaphas; but no proof is brought against him that would reach his life; till Caiaphas adjuring him to confess if he were the Son of God, and our Lord telling them they should hereafter see him come to judge the world, he is accused of blasphemy, and hurried away to the Roman Governor, being adjudged, by the Sanhedrim, worthy of death.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK VIII.

THE Paschal morn arriv'd, with solemn awe,
 From Salem's towers the sacred trumpets blow,
 Their feast announcing; and all Israel meet
 In numerous crowds through every gate and street,
 Strangers and proselytes where'er their birth,
 From various regions of the spacious earth.
 Some from the isles, Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus;
 Some from Phrygia, Lybia, and Pamphylia, come:

L. 2. *From Salem's towers the sacred trumpets blow.*] Josephus says, the priests were used to give warning by the sound of a trumpet from the towers of the temple, against any approaching festival.

From the fair fields with rivers circled wide,
 From Elam and Euphrates' flowery side. 10
 Arabia's converts to the feast repair,
 And Monobaze saw Helen's subjects there;
 From Adiabene some well known to fame;
 But most from blest Judea's regions came;
 From Dan to old Beersheba's fruitful plain, 15
 From Jazer's sea to the great western main:
 These from Phenician fields their journey take,
 From Tyrus stairs and the Cendevian lake;
 Herod his num'rous Galileans brings,
 And thins his towns to show the pride of kings:
 Strong Sephoris and rich Tiberias send 21
 Their choicest youths; Sebaste's lords attend,
 Applauding their great founder, who his guests,
 On Jordan's banks, at proud Herodian, feasts:

L. 9. *From the fair fields with rivers circled wide.*] Mesopotamia.

L. 12. *And Monobaze saw Helen's subjects there.*] Monobazus was the son of Izates, the famous proselyte on whom Josephus passes such large encomiums. Helena was queen of the same country, who was a great benefactress to Jerusalem, and, after her death, had a stately tomb erected to her memory near the city.

L. 21. *Strong Sephoris and rich Tiberias send.*] See Josephus's description of that town and its siege.

L. 24. *On Jordan's banks, at proud Herodian, feasts.*] A stately palace built by Herod the Great, near Jordan,

Thus entertain'd, they wait, and guard him down
By Jericho to Salem's sacred town. 26

His rich paternal palace they prepare,
And, rang'd before his gates, salute him there.
No sooner his approach the elders know,
Than to receive him in long state they go. 30

The Roman guards attend, loud shouts they made,
And on Antonia's towers their eagles spread;
Proclaim his honours, speak his fame abroad,
And raise the monster to a demigod.

Not so the Saviour enter'd Salem's gate! 35
No worldly honours on his footsteps wait;
He pass'd unheeded, no applause desir'd,
Display'd no trappings, and no guards requir'd.
Warm from his soul celestial virtues spring,
And hovering angels guard unseen their king. 40
A private entry seem'd his earnest choice;
But fame proclaim'd him, and the just rejoice.
On his approach, as harbingers, were sent
Cephas and John, on heavenly errands bent;

and called by his own name ; as also another which he had
in Jerusalem.

Nor could these servants question their success;
Their Lord had sent them, and their Lord must
 bless. 46

These to the place appointed them repair,
Make known their message, and the room prepare;
Procure what Moses and his friends enjoin,
The Lamb, the herbs, the bread, and sacred wine.
Meanwhile, the crowd's hosannas to prevent, 51
He rounds the walls by Sion's steep ascent;
But vain his efforts their applause to shun,
The gath'ring swarms from every quarter run;
Fame bears the news through all the crowded gates,
And the vast town almost depopulates. 56
Thus when some godlike prince, by Heav'n design'd
The common benefactor of mankind,
Rises triumphant o'er himself and fame,
And aims by virtue to exalt his name, 60
Rejects the praises of the gazing throng,
And moves regardless of their idle song;

L. 49. *Procure what Moses and his friends enjoin.*] The cup of benediction, and the bread, were added to the passover by the successors of Moses; or rather, being at first only civil, and necessary to a meal, were, in process of time, reckoned sacred, because so nearly joined with what was so.

They watch his movements, all his footsteps trace,
And round his temples wreaths of laurels place :
So when the Saviour seem'd resolv'd to go 65
In close disguise to shun the public show,
Through the thin cloud his brighter splendors shine,
The mortal form confessing the divine;
Forth pour thick myriads, his approach to meet,
And scatter flowers and blessings at his feet. 70

Arriv'd, the strangers press to see his face,
Nor was this wish confin'd to Abraham's race ;
His growing fame to Gentile nations spread,
For light divine had struck their idols dead.
The servile gods to their black caves retire, 75
And furious Ammon feels a hotter fire.
Athens, which first from Egypt's shores convey'd
Exported gods, and turn'd them into trade,—
To foreign markets did these cargoes bear,
And furnish'd Greece with this important ware,—

L. 75. *The servile gods to their black caves retire.*] It is Cowley's thought, who calls the Dæmons so, because obedient to the charms of Magicians.

L. 77. *Athens, which first from Egypt's shores convey'd.*] Herodotus says, the Greeks had all their gods from Egypt, and the Athenians were the chief traders in those commodities.

Resign'd its wealthy traffic, to adore 81
A sovereign Deity, unknown before.

Taught by the Sibyls, in whose leaves they find
" A promis'd prince, whose reign should bless
mankind,

" In scorn'd Judea born," these Grecians came,
Struck by the Saviour's miracles and fame; 86
For strong report of this amazing guest
Had drawn some thousands to the public feast.
These, with some Tyrian merchants, hasten'd
down *

To new-nam'd Julias, once Bethsaida's town; 90
And begg'd the friendly people whom they knew,
To gain for them with Christ an interview.

They with true friendship their assistance lend,
For in his court they had a well-known friend
To introduce them : meeting, they embrace; 95
('Twas Philip of the Galilean race,
Whom long they'd known :) they ask'd him to
presume

To take these Grecians to his Master's room.
Their friend and Andrew to the Saviour went,
And their request respectfully present. 100

* John, xii. 20. &c.

Our Lord with smiles their application hears ;
For well he knew their wishes and their fears :
Then, as improving the occasion, spoke,
And words like these the solemn silence broke :

“ Though all vain pomp I utterly disclaim, 105
Nor in my own, but in my Father’s name,
As yet have taught ; yet, since he does attest
My filial glory, then it must be best.

Now is the hour I shall be truly known,
And men shall see my native glory shown : 110
Now that false traitor, who from honor fell,
Yet seiz’d this world, and taught it to rebel,
Transfix’d with vengeance, sinks, and finds his }
destin’d hell. }

But ah ! how dear an empire must I win !
On what a throne my promis’d reign begin ! 115
How sad an exaltation waits me, where
I must in groans the ruin’d world repair !
Nor me my friends, nor will I them disown,
But with them mount a more resplendent throne ;
I, crown’d with thorns, o’er rocks the way will lead,
Nor must their feet on beds of roses tread. 121
This race of heroes must, through toil and pain,
Dyed with their blood, the diadem obtain ;

But in proportion to the ills they bear,
The crown will brighten which my saints shall
wear. 125

We shrink from suffering, but of this bereft
The Son of Man would have no conflict left,
Reward or merit; yet do what he can,
His labouring heart has something still of man.
Fain would his flesh avoid the shock, and fain 130
His soul shrink back from agonizing pain.

I feel in pangs these more than human woes,
And all my soul, dissolv'd in anguish, flows.
The cloud comes on;—O Heavenly Father, save;
Preserve that life which thy compassions gave;
If man can thus redeem'd ascend the sky;— 136
If not, I yield, and calmly wait to die.

It cannot be; I therefore freely give
Myself a victim, that the world may live.
But, O my Father, ere I take my flight 140
To distant regions of unclouded light,
To guard my followers from impending shame
Speak from the skies, and *glorify my name.*"

He said, and paus'd; the lambent light'nings fly,
And sounds like thunder murmur'd round the sky;
Then was the voice of God distinctly heard 146
In awful accents, and the people fear'd :

“ I have already glorified thy name,

“ And thus once more thy Deity proclaim.”

This powerful voice their firmest rancour shook,

And some asserted that an angel spoke. 151

Displeas'd with flatteries which our pride approves,

Christ from the crowd himself unseen removes;

Suspends their vision, or eludes their sense,

And with the ten goes undiscover'd thence. 155

Still more amaz'd, they strictly search'd around,

Each street and suburb search'd; and had they

found

Jesus, he had by force been king of Israel crown'd.

“ 'Twas thus, great Saul,” the throng exclaim'd,

“ withdrew;

“ But holy Samuel his retirement knew.” 160

For factious arms they instantly prepare,

And with regret the Roman ensigns bear.

Nor were his honors from the crowd alone,

The elders knew him whom they would not own;

These men, on fame and reputation stood, 165

Aim'd to be great, but fail'd in being good.

L. 154. *Suspends their vision, or eludes their sense.*] He had done so before, and it is probable might now repeat it.

When fame results from some fair actions done,
'Tis good ; if not, far better lost than won.
Happy the common race of human kind ;
Happier in this, since for their eyes or mind 170
They no disguises need ; vain forms they break,
And sense but dictates what they freely speak.
The common mass, his foes could not endure ;
Scarce was their safety, more than his, secure.
Christ, who perceiv'd their strong misguided zeal,—
Saw priests oppose, but saw the mob prevail, 176
On either side their conduct disapprov'd,
Nor such licentious reformation lov'd.
Int'rest, not truth, their partial suffrage draws ;
They hail him king, but disobey his laws. 180

The elders saw his doctrines more prevail,
And felt with pain their false foundations fail ;

L. 169. *Happy the common race of human kind.*] That is, if we speak only of that sort of contentment which this world is able to afford : for there is no true happiness but in God.

L. 174. *Scarce was their safety more than his secure.*] It is said, that the Pharisees feared the people ; and were not for seizing our Saviour on the feast-day, lest there should be an uproar among the populace. But their virulence against Christ soon made them alter their opinion.

And, as successes crown'd what they abhorr'd,
They grew determin'd to employ the sword ;
Since each perceiv'd, that in this crisis all 185
Their impositions, or his cause, must fall.

The fiend employ'd in his infernal cell
Receiv'd a spy return'd from earth to hell,
Who brought the dreadful news : repuls'd before,
The conclave he resolves to call no more, 190
Till some great act achiev'd, some crime was done,
So black as Satan should not blush to own.
From every squadron silently he drew
Such imps as he most fit for action knew ;
Such as all parties might to his engage ; 195
Some skill'd in raising tumults, storms, and rage ;
The same that tempted Dathan ere he fell,
And dragg'd the culprit afterwards to hell.
Some, like himself when cheating facile Eve,
Train'd in his school, were practis'd to deceive. 200
These, sent from hell, the sons of guilt affright
With monstrous forms and spectres of the night :
With joys impure surcharge the guilty breast,
And rob the watchful of their tranquil rest.
Some miser fiends among infernals base, 205
The lowest sunk of all th' apostate race,

These, mines, and burial-grounds, and treasures
hold,

And howl in tombs around their secret gold.

Yet these, let virtue plead whate'er it can,

Maintain the strongest property in man. 210

How few are proof against their fatal arts,

When Satan bars with gold his fiery darts !

Like those of love, they no distinction make :

Kings, priests, and peasants, they assail and take :

Rank, sex, and age, weak, infamous, and bold, 215

Submit alike to all-subduing gold.

These spirits, their leader, in whose cause they
fell,

Muster'd in haste, the strong gens-d'armes of hell ;

With conscious pride his household troops review'd,

And then his scheme to ruin man pursu'd. 220

Arriv'd on earth, each legion takes its post,

Explores the town, and ranges every coast ;

But, as their tyrant order'd, all conceal,

Lest some kind Angel should to man reveal

L. 223. *But, as their tyrant order'd, all conceal.*] An angel, being but a finite creature, cannot have infinite knowledge ; whence it seems possible, that the wicked spirits may frequently conceal their ill designs from them.

Their real design : some did themselves dispose
To rouse their friends, and some to tempt their
foes. 22

Foremost in rank, their leader wings his way
(For night had now reliev'd the weary day)
To Salem's towers ; and, as the rebel flew,
A glance full-fraught with hellish curses threw. 230
He seem'd to fear the people would repent,
And by their prayers the destin'd wrath prevent.
Straight to the Pontiff's palace he repair'd,
In form adapted to elude the guard :
The bolted gates, he, penetrating, pass'd, 235
Swift and invisible, and round him cast
The form of old Hircanus, grave and sage,
The same his stature, visage, mein and age ;
His voice the same, his hands a censer bore,
And his grey hairs the sacred mitre wore. 240

In still and deep repose the Pontiff lay,
Tir'd with the work and pleasures of the day,
Stern Caiaphas—the fiend approach'd his bed,
And leaning on his hand his palsied head,
With loud and lamentable voice express'd 245
The great occasion that disturb'd his rest.

“ Awake, my son, thy flocks demand thy care;
Or now awake, or sink in deep despair.
But canst thou sleep; and meanly stoop so low,
And yield the day to our triumphant foe, 250
Who now, by thy remissness powerful grown,
Instructs the crowd, and claims them for his own?
I saw the temple left without defence;—
My grave insulted when I rose from thence;—
Perceiv’d thy sword neglected where it stood, 255
And sheath’d in rust, that should have shin’d in
blood.

Torne, is that veil, which kept from vulgar eyes
The needful secret of so rich a prize.
Was it for this my great forefathers broke 259
The chains of strangers and the heathen yoke?
For this, like bulwarks round their country stood,
And shed such seas of honorable blood?
O ye great Maccabees! too dear it cost
To buy what your degenerate sons have lost.
Say, did Hircanus thus your line disgrace, 265
Or meanly act beneath your glorious race?
He grasp’d your censer, and your sword he bore,
Sustain’d your mitre, and your crown he wore:

In spite of fortune he preserv'd your fame,
Nor basely trembled at great Pompey's name.
His successors scarce half his power share, 271
The Roman thraldom is but part you bear.
To yield is manly when great men subdue,
But an obscure impostor conquers you.
If herbs and names perform what has been
done,
This should be known to sons of Solomon. 276
Why will you suffer the exploits you see
Perform'd by Christ, and twelve as weak as he?

L. 270. *Nor basely trembled at great Pompey's name.*] Who, in this time, came to Jerusalem. See an account of it in Joseph. Antiq.

L. 271. *His successors scarce half his power share.*] Old Hircanus, and the rest, had the sacred and civil power united in them.

L. 275. *If herbs and names perform what has been done.*] The Rabbies talk much of the power of charms, and profess the knowledge of them. They pretend that they deduce it from Solomon. Josephus tells a very grave story, as if he believed it, of one who did strange things with an herb, casting out devils, and bringing persons to life again, when they lay senseless. The Jews have a foolish tale, that our Saviour wrought all his wonders (against the reality of which, it seems, they have nothing to say) by virtue of the Tetragrammaton sewed up in his thigh.

You see them prosper, and the crowd forsake,
And idly view the proselytes they make. 280

Swarms press'd on swarms, around his standard
wait,

And seize the ensigns and the bolts of fate.

These will he soon to bolder deeds persuade,

The sacred Sanhedrim and throne invade,

The crown and sceptre at his feet to bring, 285

And hail this Galilean wretch your king.

But shall he rise, or are my fears in vain?

O'er none but slaves, a slave deserves to reign.

He reigns not yet, thus far is Israel free,

And will with blood maintain their liberty; 290

Quench the new flame, and pull this serpent down,

And stop his efforts to obtain a crown.

But though you cannot former ills redress,

Present and future you may still suppress;—

Go then, dispatch him, or his fate convey, 295

And purge the town on this great festal day.

Go, call the Sanhedrim—you see the way.”—

He said, and sunk,—the Pontiff rais'd his eyes,
And, wildly staring, for his guards applies;

Then, trembling, answer'd—"Yes, thou mighty
shade, 300

"Thy wholesome counsel shall be soon obey'd ;

"This day he dies ; his destiny is past,

"The next revolving sun shall be his last."

His ent'ring guards he round the city sends,
And calls to council his congenial friends. 305

The priests and elders of inferior sway

His powerful mandate instantly obey ;

They knew the business was of urgent need,

Which both demanded secrecy and speed.

But though in secret these their message do, 310

Joseph had learnt it, and Gamaliel too ;

Who to the council with the rest repair,

And find their friend, sage Nicodemus, there.

Assembled, Caiaphas ascends the chair,

And thus begins, with an assuming air : 315

Th

"Fathers of Israel ! You will soon perceive

The cause which made me this disturbance give

To all assembled ; neither do I fear

Unkind reproofs from any persons here.

The great occasion then is known full well 320

To all the favorers of Israel.

All must the growth of Nazareth's sect perceive,
And on their prophet see the world believe ;
How undeplor'd our own and nation's fate,
Unless we help,—nay, this may be too late. 325
Can we our church and state survey unmov'd,
By age grown reverend, and by God belov'd ?
Can we forsake these walls, and see the place
Seiz'd and dishonour'd by an earth-born race,
Sink to contempt, and meanly quit our seat,
Die in disgrace, or live obscurely great! 331
Or, if we give ourselves and town away,
Can we those laws which he assails betray,
Behold our temple from its glory hurl'd,
And Salem made a proverb to the world? 335
At thrones and empires the impostor drives,
Deep lays his schemes, and secret plots contrives ;
What angels taught, he threatens to repe
And would like Moses new commands revea
But why should we debate these points in awe ?
His birth-place, parents, and his friends we know.

L. 323. And on their prophet see the world believe.]
According to that saying of theirs, "The whole world
is gone after him."

His father follows a mechanic trade,
And He in learning has no progress made.
Yet this vile upstart, though connected thus,
Assumes a power to teach the world, and us ! 345
The crowd, I grant, his miracles proclaim,
But did not Egypt's jugglers do the same ?
'Tis true, he gives to wond'rous actions birth,
But evil spirits still patrol the earth.
We must not then our law for wonders leave, 350
Nor a false prophet, tempted thus, receive.
Should he prevail, (which, O avert, ye pow'rs
That rule the world,) his laws succeed to ours :
What should we gain—what has he more complete
Than our great prophet ? What sublime or great ?
For fishers, carpenters, his laws may do ; 356
But, reverend fathers, not for me and you,
Rulers and warriors, to brave deeds inclin'd ;
These clog the soul, and sink the rising mind.
Smote and despis'd, you must the culprit spare,
Love those who hate you, and their insults bear. 361

L. 358. *Rulers and warriors, to brave deeds inclin'd.*] So says the subtile Machiavel ; who understood the christian religion so ill, that he says it makes men mean-spirited, and is an enemy to magnanimity and glory.

Now sunk too low, he straight too high aspires,
And strange impracticable deeds requires ;
His specious doctrine wages war with fate,
Suppressing anger, mirth, revenge, and hate. 365
Nor does he leave thought, sense, or reason free,
But clogs the whole with frightful mystery.
His word is law; none else will he endure ;
And where this reigns, no state can be secure.
Our crimes and punishment he makes his themes,
Our holy rites contemptuously blasphemes ; 371
Our sacred temple he disdains to spare ;
What more than this could bold Samaria dare ?
Serpents and vipers this high court he calls,
Sly hypocrites, gay tombs, and whited walls. 375
Our power to censure, this proud sect denies,
And all our holy curses they despise ;

L. 367. *But clogs the whole with frightful mystery.*] I have endeavoured to make Caiaphas as good a spokesman for the Atheists and Deists as I possibly could ; though I hope Joseph fully answers every part of his argument.

L. 373. *What more than this could bold Samaria dare.*] The Samaritans did commonly put affronts on the Jewish temple ; once particularly, Josephus says, they came in the night-time and scattered bones about it, which occasioned a great tumult.

Our lawful profits term unholy gain,
And Israel's fathers scarcely treat as men.
As to himself, who thus aspires to reign, 380
He freely speaks, nay, eats with the unclean ;
Breaks our traditions, mocks us when we grieve ;
In short, if Corban lives, he cannot live.
But still beyond all mortals he presumes,
And to himself the name of God assumes ; 385
Makes God his equal, boasts of ancient birth,
And says his wisdom form'd the spacious earth :
He with the Godhead claims co-equal right,
And calls himself, the *Son*, the *Word*, of might.
This *Son*, this *Word*, of pristine glory shorn, 390
From days of old, from everlasting born,
Derides our power, mortality defies,
And claims his kindred in the deathless skies.
If crimes like these we tamely see and hear,
What can we merit, but a fate severe 395
As what th' impostor threatens?—how can we
Ourselves, our children, and our nation free
From the black guilt and fate of blasphemy?
This restless troubler of our Israel dies ;
This fatal Achan we must sacrifice. 400
And, if the sacred ephod aught inspire,
I feel the glowing sparks of heavenly fire :

Then hear what my enlighten'd mind foresees,
Can that be bad which Heaven itself decrees?

“ Israel in vain attempts her fate to fly, * 405

“ Unless for all her sons one man devoted die.”

Thus having said, the whole affair he leaves :

The motley council variously receives

The warm oration ; some his zeal admir'd,

And thought his counsel by some god inspir'd ;—

Thought him deserving marvellous esteem, 411

And plac'd the safety of the state on him :

While those who saw with more impartial eyes, }
Pierc'd the thin veil, the varnish, and disguise, }

Which cloth'd in sophistry his specious lies. 415

They paus'd awhile, but none the silence broke,

Till arm'd with prudence Nicodemus spoke :

“ Unfeign'd respect to God's high-priest is due,

“ And much regard to what may drop from you,

“ Men, brethren, fathers ; yet I needs must say,

“ To those who seem so forward to obey ; 421

“ Their ardent zeal our welfare to secure,

“ However just, seems rather premature.

* John, xi. 50.

“ Well has it been observ’d, and none denies,
“ Our laws are sacred, the blasphemers dies, 425
“ Condemn’d by these: but, the same statutes
 guard
“ The culprit’s life, till his defence is heard.
“ Who could be safe, might popular fame accuse?
“ None here, I dare be bold, that judge would chuse.
“ Not that I would an advocate be thought, 430
“ For those who seek, or Salem’s ruin sought;
“ But truth and justice from my lips demand
“ These short remarks, and guard me where I
 stand.”

More had he said, but Rama’s wealthy lord
With fervent zeal thus seiz’d the closing word:
“ That cautious fear of censure is not mine, 436
To own a Master who appears divine.
Let naked truth prevail, plain natural sense,
Without the gaudy paint of eloquence.
Though interest suffer, or though pride repine,
I own him, I confess him; Lord, I’m thine;— }
He came from heaven—his laws must be divine. }
I love my country, but his name adore; 443
Feel much for rites, but feel for justice more:

This sterling motive is my sole pretence 445
For rising thus to speak in his defence.
Can int'rest prompt the person you despise
To mask his vices in a deep disguise?
Can he relax those laws his words dispense,
Or be rewarded to delude our sense ; 450
Destroy those virtues which his life proclaims,
Or undermine the truths at which he aims?
This seems the most improbable pretence
That e'er was palm'd on spotless innocence.
How oft to law and prophets he appeals, 455
Myself have heard ; nor other truths reveals,
But what within our sacred volumes lie,
Though veil'd till now in clouds and mystery.
How oft has he (I still my witness give,
Which till this hour you would not disbelieve,)
Declar'd one tittle should not pass away 461
Till this vast frame of heaven and earth decay?
We are but men, nor all things can discern ;
Are we too wise from Heaven itself to learn ?
When the orac'lous ephod us'd to shine, 465
Did any doubt the characters divine ?
Say not 'tis ceas'd ; see here decypher'd still,
More plain and legible, the Father's will.

Th' Eternal Word does mortal mould assume,—
Our wretched clay,—does he in this presume? 470
Announc'd from Heaven, to teach the world he
came;—

Could e'er impostors yet pretend the same?
If so, they honor or advantage seek;
But Zion's king is humble, lowly, meek.
If we Heaven's attestation should deny, 475
Twice spoke in thunder from the opening sky,
In which the Father's high regard was shown,
And Christ acknowledg'd as his only Son,
We Moses too must leave in clouds and smoke;
For heav'n but *once* the ten commandments
spoke. 480

“ But Egypt's jugglers wond'rous signs did show;
'Tis own'd; but did not our great Moses too?
And yet you all confess his mission clear;
Assign the difference, and we'll find it here.

L. 476. *Twice spoke in thunder from the opening sky.*] Once at Jordan, and once at the feast; indeed, there was a third attestation in the same manner, at Mount Tabor, at the Transfiguration; but this Joseph could not be supposed to know, because the three disciples only were witnesses of it, and were forbidden to disclose it before the resurrection.

Theirs for false gods and idols vain were wrought;
His in defence of sacred truths were brought. 485
Thus God's own arm their magic charms o'erpower'd,
As Aaron's serpent all their swarms devour'd.

Long had predictions said, "The chosen band
" Shall, deep enslav'd, remain in Mizraim's land,
" Sustain great hardships, smart beneath the rod,
" Till manumitted by the power of God." 492

This train of wonders was but kindly sent,
To mark, promote, and lead to the event.
Truth, justice, mercy, prophecy, and sign,
Beyond dispute, attest our Lord divine. 496

What Rabbi e'er so clearly taught before
How man might God in spirit and truth adore?
Moses, though much, did not all truths discern;
He left us something to explain and learn. 500

His life and death avow the cause I plead;
Why else did prophets to this prince succeed?
Why did this seer another teacher show,
If from his laws the world might all things know?
Behold this Teacher, true, if God be true; 505
For none but God such mighty works could do.
We first had gold, but he refines our gold,
And his new law fills and explains the old.

The piece before was masterly and fine,
 But touch'd by him it glows with life divine. 510
 When Moses said—"The Lord thy God will raise *
 " A wond'rous prophet in the latter days ;"
 Did not Jehovah in reply declare
 Death to such rebels as refus'd to hear ? 514
 And what are those who basely spend their breath
 In plots, and councils, to promote his death ?
 How many a prophet sings—how full and plain,
 Of his sublime nativity, and reign,
 And wond'rous works ! If need of proof there be,
 Even Caiaphas has own'd that this is he : 520
 His time and coming Heathen tribes confess,
 And wait him now,—shall Israel then do less ?

* Deut. xviii. 15, &c. . .

L. 521. *His time and coming Heathen tribes confess.*]
 I shall here insert a passage out of Plato ; which, methinks,
 without the help of fancy, looks very much that way. It
 is in his dialogues ; the words are these : ἀναγκαῖον ἐν,
 &c. One says, " It is necessary that we expect, till it may
 " be learned how we ought to behave ourselves towards
 " God and man. The other replies, τις ὁ παιδευσον, &c.
 " But who is the teacher ? for I would most willingly ac-
 " knowledge the man. Answ. " This is he who takes care
 " of thee. But it seems to me, that as Homer makes
 " Minerva take away the cloud from the eyes of Diomedes,

Look nature through, in all her works are found
 Systems and worlds by him together bound :
 Should God, but these, no other witness give,
 The laws of reason urge us to believe. 526

Say, shall we then this nobler gift abuse,
 And all its proofs indignantly refuse ;
 Invert our natures, contradict our sense,
 And disbelieve through weight of evidence ? 530
 So just his laws, that, were they but obey'd,
 The world would soon a Paradise be made.

You call him mean: may I that meanness have! }
 Still may my passion be my reason's slave!— }
 To tread on wrongs is to be great and brave : 535 }

He, who above himself and others lives,
 Obtains a conquest when his soul forgives :
 He who defies death, pain, and tortures too,
 But dares not one unrighteous action do;—
 Avows his friends however far disjoin'd;— 540
 Withstands the shocks of earth and hell combin'd;—
 Contemns whole Sanhedrims against him sworn;—
 And bears, unmov'd, the stream of public scorn;—

“ ὅφρ' εὖ γινώσκει ἡμὲν θεὸν ἢ δὲ καὶ ἄνδρα, that he
 “ might be able to distinguish between a *God* and a *man*,
 “ so ought the darkness to be first removed from thy
 “ mind, &c.”

Sustains assaults, and still himself secures,
And all the rage of hostile fiends endures ;— 545
Legions of men, as black as these, defies ;—
And leaves his vindication with the skies ;
Who aims his honour and his soul to save ;—
If he be base—the coward world is brave.

Too well you know he is not base or mean ; 550
Your words refute you when you change the scene.
Would he reform too much ?—too pure his law ?

In modesty that shameful plea withdraw !
Yet here's the point—who can such strictness bear ?
We must not steal, nor lie, nor rail, nor swear. 555

A spotless breast he loves ; his laws require
Men to subdue the rage of base desire ;
Their terms sublime are possible and free
To all who love unvarnish'd piety.

What reason's voice forbids us to receive, 560
He neither bids us practise nor believe.

If sunk below our dignity in vice,
The Saviour comes to make us great and wise,
To raise us to the state of Paradise.

Who e'er did the three Principles deny, 565
Gentile or Jew ? No other mystery

L. 565. *Who e'er did the three Principles deny.*] I think it is demonstrable, that all sects of Philosophers did

Unknown to us his wholesome law contains ;
The rest, like fables, spring from fertile brains.
But, above all the slanders which abound, 569
And, like some curses, those who cast them wound,
None is so strange or deadly, as that He
Is to the civil state an enemy.
Can purest order anarchy approve ?
As justly may the hawk implead the dove,
War suit the Prince of Peace, or hate join heaven-
born love ? 575
If he one Lord proclaims, one faith requires,
Our church professes all that he desires.
Yet rational and free he leaves us still,
Nor interdicts the intellect or will.
Reason, though impotent, still warns from sin, 580
God's laws without, his gentle Spirit within.

own the three Principles, and consequently had some notion of a Trinity, though few of them were wholly orthodox. The Pythagoreans own the first, second, and third ONE, the third partaking of the first and second. The same I could prove of others, out of Plutarch, nay, out of Julian himself. Nor is there, as far as I know, any thing in the christian religion besides the doctrine of the *Trinity* (on which the *incarnation* depends) that is properly mysterious ; I mean, not clear and fathomable by our reason, when once revealed.

In his commands example leads the way,
He prays himself when he instructs to pray ;
Reproves, and shows, to others who reprove,
That strength of argument consists in love. 585

Harlots and publicans whom you disdain,
Dissolv'd in tears, he smiles to entertain ;
Abhors the hypocrite, all hearts he knows,
The secret villain glories to expose ;
With those he can almost be angry ; these, 590
He plainly tells God's righteous plagues shall seize :
And, O my country, if resolv'd to make
Their crimes thy own, thou must their doom
partake.

Why wilt thou not the surgeon's hand endure,
To probe the wound which yet admits a cure ? 595
Will God in heaven from dust a check receive,
Nor thunder till the creature gives him leave ?
Can he blaspheme himself, or be afraid
Of threat'ning mandates which his worms have
made ?

Hear my confession then, 'tis plain and free ; 600
Once more, " The Word is God, and Jesus He."
Hence, though the Pontiff urges " 'Tis decreed
That for our sins this spotless Lamb must bleed ;"

To crimes this cannot force us, or excuse ;
 Fig-leaves like these, ev'n Adam would not use. 605
 Reason, with truth and grace, our steps must
 guide ;

Else you defend the blackest parricide.

Nay, Heaven appears in guilt much deeper far,
 And we in murder but abettors are. 609

“ Since, then, 'tis plain that this just man is free
 From all those crimes which spite and calumny,
 Conjoin'd, would gather to reproach his name,
 To blast his deeds, and tarnish all his fame ;—
 Since this great Prophet—infinately more—
 This great Messiah, promis'd long before, 615
 Appears to bless us and dispel our pride,
 And kindly offers to become our guide,—
 Proceed we then, without one murmuring thought,
 To seize those favors which his goodness brought.
 The great compassions which his doctrines teach
 Have left us still within his mercy's reach : 621
 If what is past we through his grace amend,
 He will forgive us, and become our friend.”

L. 605. *Fig-leaves like these, ev'n Adam would not use.*]
 He never pleaded necessity for his sin.

He said, and sat ; the wondering senate gaz'd ;
Some seem'd offended, all appear'd amaz'd ; 625
In angry silence his opposers frown,
While some applauded what they durst not own :
So when, rough Boreas, thy black squadrons sweep
The aged bosom of the hoary deep,
In hills of foam the angry billows rise, 630
Forsake their caverns, and invade the skies ;
But when bless'd Zephyr, from his spicy vales,
Rides gently out with soft Etesian gales,
The storm subsides, the waves forget to roar,
Move on in peace, and softly kiss the shore, 635
And, smiling, wonder why they rag'd before :
Thus to resistless truth their passions yield,
And reason's voice almost regain'd the field ;
Dissembled rage affected to relent,
And all appear'd to hesitate assent :— 640
All but fierce Caiaphas, who, in reply,
Would nothing grant, yet nothing could deny :
He seem'd asham'd ; yet in the cause engag'd,
When quite confounded, grew the more enrag'd.
He paus'd awhile ; at length his voice regains, 645
And, all confus'd, denounces and complains,

Reproaches, censures, argues, and reviles,
Commands with frowns, and makes his court with
smiles ;

To passions, int'rests, in their turns applies,
And truth and decency alike defies. 650

These strange appeals the faithless senate sway'd,
Who now their conscience, now his voice obey'd ;
The last who speaks, speaks best in the debate,
And truth and falsehood seem'd of equal weight.

At length the *prudent* were compell'd to yield, 655
For fraud and tumult overspread the field ;

Those bent on blood the greatest numbers bore,
And truth and reason could be heard no more.

But while contending minds and interests fight,
Beneath the shelter of the silent night 660

Our Lord, who knew the power and rage of hell,
Takes his last supper, and his last farewell.

He knew his friends, the treach'rous Judas knew,
Saw his own sufferings, and what all would do ;

Yet meekly bows to the afflictive rod, 665
And yields submission to the will of God.

First, on the lamb, as use required, they fed,
Like their forefathers when from Egypt led ;

For all those rites were his peculiar care,
Which apt allusions to his mission bear. 670

The supper ended, he before them spread
The cup of blessing, and the hallow'd bread ;
Which in his hands alternately he took,
And, kindly giving, his disciples spoke :—

“ Take this, and eat ; behold in this design'd 675

“ Your Saviour's body broken for mankind ;

“ Let this memorial, when from earth he goes,

“ Record his love, and malice of his foes :”

Then took the cup which mystic wine contain'd,
Describ'd its virtues, and its use explain'd : 680

“ This is my blood, for man's redemption shed ;

“ Drink, *all*, of *this*, as *all* receiv'd the bread :

“ I die ; the traitor and my fate I know,

“ But woes await the wretch by whom I go.

“ I see him here, his hand is on the board ; 685

“ He eats my bread, and yet betrays his Lord.”

A speech so strange excited all their fears,
And bath'd their souls in more than outward tears ;
Each felt its force, and, gazing on the rest,
Examin'd closely his alarmed breast: 690

For information all to Christ apply,
Each puts the question—"Master, is it I?"
With fault'ring tongue, but undissembling eyes,
Iscariot asks ; to whom our Lord replies,—
" On this occasion thou canst well divine, 695
" But to my friends this sop shall be the sign."
Judas, receiving this, forsakes the rest,
And yields to Satan all his guilty breast ;
Then to the Sanhedrim directs his way, 699
To sell his Lord, and make his blood their prey ;
This fair occasion soon decides their strife,
And Judas bargains for his Master's life.
The few, who firm in virtue's cause remain,
Soon felt the tide with which they strove in vain ;
And, on perceiving Christ's impending doom, 705
Enter'd their protest and forsook the room.

Meanwhile the traitor from the court implor'd
A band of soldiers to secure his Lord.
To him, he said, his hours and haunts were known
And he would lead them to the spot alone. 710
But, with revenge as avarice partly sway'd,
He for his crime expected to be paid ;

He would of silver thirty pieces have,
The average value of a common slave.
Elate with joy, the Sanhedrim provide 715
Money and soldiers for their cursed guide :
These took their torches, and with rancour went,
And left the senate waiting the event.

Our Lord's disciples, weigh'd with grief and fear
At his discourses that his hour was near, 720
Though quite unconscious that this fatal night
Conceal'd Iscariot's conduct from their sight,
Demanded comfort to console their breast;
Which Christ perceiv'd, and thus himself
express'd :

“ Let not your hearts be troubl'd, but believe, *
And God will richest consolations give. 726
For though I go, no cause remains to fear ;
In heaven I'll guard you, as I guard you here.
I go before : nor can I, if I stay, 729
To those bright mansions mark the shining way ;
But love like mine with constant fervor glows,
And, though remote, no diminution knows.

* John, xiv. 1, &c.

I, when remov'd, the Comforter will send,
The wisest advocate, the gentlest friend,
Whom nought but sin can from your breast remove
Nor will he leave you till you cease to love. 73
Sure of this friend, you may with smiles despise
The daring efforts of your enemies.
The world will hate you, if your lives are true ;
It hated me before it hated you. 74
Yet know, its rage will prove your greatest friend
And kindly waft you to your journey's end;
To your advantage all its storms will be,
And teach you best to know yourselves and me.
Firm to my cause, and to each other, stand ; 75
A band of Christians is a deathless band.
Were you unguarded, you would soon be shown
A prey to weakness, to yourselves unknown ;
When strong temptations and your foes assail,
Your boasted courage and your faith would fail,
By me forsaken, you would leave my side, 76
And scorn your Lord in whom you now confide.

Cephas, who heard, exclaim'd——“ Lord, I can
die

“ For thy dear name ; but not thy name deny.”

The rest concurr'd, oppress'd with virtuous pain,
And all such baseness utterly disdain. 756

The Saviour spoke: " Too well your hearts I know
Beyond deception, as th' event will show.

But as for him whose zeal such rashness wears,
Who seems elated to despise his fears, 760

Thrice ere this morn its mournful beams display,
Ere twice the cock proclaims approaching day,*

He'll fall an awful victim to his fear,

Deny my name, and basely curse and swear.

But I shall pray, and shall be heard above, 765

And Peter's crime shall be subdu'd by love.

" I go, O Father, to thy will resign'd;

But these my lambs must still remain behind.

O guard them here, all intimately one,

Like thee, O righteous Father, and the Son. 770

Let thy bright image on their bosoms shine,

Enrich'd with grace, and fill'd with love divine ;

Till the deluded world triumphant see,

That these from me came forth, as I from thee ;

The genuine glories of fair virtue own, 77

Like those which beam from thy illustrious throne.

* Mark, xiv. 30, 68, 72.

When life's dull scene has led to happier days,
To that bless'd world thy genuine servants raise ;
Through me, to them shall all thy goodness shine,
Theirs the enjoyment, their redemption mine. 780
And may that bliss, which, ere the world was made,
Thy Son through vast eternity enjoy'd,
Reward my saints for all their suff'rings past,
With cloudless joys that shall for ever last !"

Thus having said,—o'er Kidron's brook and
plain 785

To sweet Gethsemane he walks again,
With Cephas and the Zebedean pair,
To seek in shades a close retirement there.
The rest he leaves ; nor to these chosen talks,
But in deep silence meditating walks. 790
At length, in sighs which agitate his breast,
The Saviour thus his agonies express'd :

" My soul, distracted and amaz'd with grief,
Looks round the world in vain to find relief.
I feel death's heavy weight with loads of care 795
Too much for frail humanity to bear.
Why should my servants with their Master go,
And see his sufferings, to partake his woe,

With pensive bosoms catch contagious grief,
And mourn, unable to confer relief?" 800

He said, and mov'd into the deepest shade,
Where on the ground he prostrate fell, and pray'd.

But, oh! what griefs, what agonizing love,
Did the Redeemer both sustain and prove!

Amazing sorrows, which we can't conceive,— 805

The God eclips'd, appear'd the man to leave!

" My Father, oh! if possible it be,—

" Unbounded might! what is not so to thee?"

The Saviour cries, as on his face he lay,

" O take this cup, this bitter cup, away! 810

" The wrath divine unmix'd this cup contains,

" And hellish poison agitates my veins.

" 'Tis not, alas! a single death I dread;

" How calmly could I lean my weary head 814

" On the cold earth and common mother's breast,

" And gladly glide to everlasting rest!

" Of public death the infamy I scorn,

" Though rank'd with slaves when to the gibbet
borne; 818

" Nor shame, nor fear, should urge me to complain,

" Though death's dread pomp were to augment
the pain.

“ O Heaven, thy vengeance constitutes the curse,
“ Than pain, or shame, or death; or torments,
worse.

“ O can I, must I, be from him remov’d,
“ Who from eternity has been belov’d ?
“ Must I despair, who never saw that brow 825
“ With frowns disguis’d, nor clouds obscur’d; till
now ?

“ But if, alas ! no other way is given
“ To gain the favour of avenging Heaven,
“ Resign’d I die, for human crimes atone,
“ And tread the wine-press of thy wrath alone.
“ I come, O injur’d Father; Lord, I yield ; 831
“ Nor shall thy Son be vanquish’d in the field.
“ For this great end the foes of man I meet,
“ Nor view my actions with the least regret.
“ Had man with love obey’d his God, to cure 835
“ His wounds I should no agonies endure.”

More pains did then the suffering Saviour feel
Than hearts when trembling on the pointed steel.
What deep convulsive agonies he found,
Which every part of soul and body wound,— 840

Which all the harmony of both displace,
While blood and sweat ran mingled down his face!
As much as holy man could bear, and more,
The Son of God without a murmur bore;
And would have triumph'd o'er this host of foes,
And ris'n victorious from this sea of woes, 846
Had only earth and hell their forces join'd,
Nor Heav'n augmented what this league combin'd.
But angry Heav'n, that seem'd severe while just,
Weigh'd down his soul, and lodg'd it in the dust:
It long'd to sally from its dark abode, 851
Press'd with our sins' intolerable load.
He sinks, half buried in a world of woe,
Though hands unseen administer the blow.
Nor could he longer keep the field alone, 855
But to his Father pour'd his piercing groan.
The Father heard, and glorified his name,
And shook all nature's universal frame;
To his relief a mighty angel sent,
And fearful nature trembled as he went. 860
He consolation to our Lord convey'd,
Knelt by his side, and sooth'd him while he pray'd
Reviv'd his soul, did all his strength replace,
And wip'd the sanguine moisture from his face.

Renew'd in pow'r, lie own'd that guardian care
Which God bestow'd in answer to his prayer, 866
Sustain'd with vigour the incumbent load,
And urg'd his plea in man's behalf with God ;
Express'd his love, nor offer'd to complain,
Though strength renew'd, renew'd his sense of pain.

Hither let Greece her boasted heroes bring,
And see them fade by Salem's peaceful King.
Let him approach, who Cæta's hill did rove,
The boast of fable, and the son of Jove.
Enrag'd Alcides, mad with burning pain, 875
Wag'd war with Heav'n, and struggled with his
chain,

In groans of rage and wickedness expir'd,
And like a demon from the world retir'd.
Such are the heroes on the lists of fame, 879
And such the gods that grace the heathen name !

Saviour, forgive ! 'tis almost blasphemy
To name at once their spurious gods and thee.
Like thee in dignity, what idols dare,—
What wretched man with God's own Son compare?
O Root of Jesse, may our actions prove 885
How much we love thee for thy dying love !

Through earth's wide realm may war and discord
cease,
And sterling virtue lead to lasting peace !

Meanwhile his three sad friends, with sleep
oppress'd,
Which clos'd their eyes, while sorrow fill'd the
breast, — 890

On nature's couch in darkness lay reclin'd,
And stole repose for body and for mind :
But when our Lord, who had retir'd to weep,
Return'd and found them overcharg'd with sleep,
He woke them, saying—" Is it thus you prove
" Your boasted courage and your boasted love ?
" For all my service can you think it hard
" One tedious hour to be your Master's guard ?
" If so, let int'rest banish your repose ; 899
" For know, you slumber in the arms of foes.
" Oh ! watch and pray, your Master bids you fear ;
" For Judas, Satan, and my death, are near."

Thence to the shades our Lord again repairs,
Resumes his fervor, and renews his prayers. 904
Twice he comes back ; as oft his friends he found
O'ercome with sleep, in stubborn sorrow drown'd.

At last returning, "Take your rest," he cries,
"And, if you can, indulge your drowsy eyes;
"I sleep no more till the great ransom's paid;
"The hour is come—the Saviour is betray'd. 910
"Yet still he warns you, who remiss have been,
"Nor leaves those friends who did not watch with
him.
"Once more, arise, let prudence be your guide,
"And for your safety or your death provide."

Thus having said, they started in a fright, 915
And saw strange fires illuminate the night;
Torches and guards in solemn state appear,
And noisy rabbles follow'd in the rear.
On their approach confusion fill'd the place,
And fix'd dismay on each disciple's face. 920
Once more was Christ compell'd to interpose
Between his timid friends and spiteful foes;
For in this combat perfectly he knew
His foes were men, and what these men could do;
Then boldly ask'd those guards who seem'd afraid,
"Whom they pursu'd—for whom this uproar
made." 926
"Jesus," they cried:—"If that your business be,
"No farther seek," he answers; "I am He."

O Power divine ! at this majestic sound
 The trembling guards fell prostrate to the ground ;
 Yet bent on blood they rise and forward go, 931
 As if but harden'd by the recent blow.
 Again he asks,—again they urge the same,
 And Christ once more avows his proper name ;—
 Adds, “ If you seek me, let my friends depart ;”
 For still their welfare occupied his heart. 936

Then hasty Cephas from its scabbard drew
 His ready sword, and on the rabble flew,
 Repels their onsets, deals his strokes around,
 Resolv'd to murder, or inflict a wound : 940
 The crowds retire, not anxious to engage
 His forward zeal, thus arm'd with desp'rate rage.
 Malchus alone stood firmer than the rest,
 A noted servant of the sovereign priest ;
 To Peter's arm oppos'd his single might, 945
 And met that sword which put their hosts to flight.
 The challenge instantly th' Apostle took,
 And cast on Malchus an unholy look,
 Then rear'd his arm on his devoted head,
 And aims a blow to lodge him with the dead. 950
 Malchus, before the fatal stroke was clos'd,
 Guarded his head, but left his ear expos'd ;

The sword descending smote it to the ground,
And on his temple left a ghastly wound.

“ Thus far,” says Christ, “ my suff’rance is to show
“ What all my servants, if I please, can do. 956
“ Cephas, with speed thy bloody sword return,
“ Nor furnish friends or foes with cause to mourn.
“ Once more attend thy captive Saviour’s word ;
“ He who unsheaths, must perish by the sword.
“ Think’st thou, were I determin’d not to die,
“ My applications would not reach the sky ?
“ Were I resolv’d to terminate this strife,
“ Angelic legions would defend my life ; 964
“ For these celestial bands adore me still :
“ But this is not my heavenly Father’s will.”

Thus said, his hands the wounded ear restore,
And leave no scar where blood had gush’d before.

Meanwhile the traitor, who was hov’ring near,
Deep in the crowd conceal’d his guilty fear ; 970
He mark’d the progress of the past events,
But grows more harden’d as his Lord relents ;
Perceiv’d the tenderness which Christ had us’d,
And thus contriv’d to make it more abus’d ;—
In friendship’s visor hides his odious guile, 975
And basely hails him with a kiss and smile.

Christ felt the wound, but spoke no more than
this—

“ Judas, betray'st thou Jesus with a kiss?”

The mark thus given had been by him assign'd,
That in the night the guards our Lord might find.
They watch'd the signal, saw the kiss impress'd,
And boldly seiz'd, and dragg'd him from the rest.
When hurried thence, his scatter'd household fly
Like fearful lambs when prowling wolves are nigh.
Their faithful guide or torne from them or slain,
Even Peter flees, and owns his boasts are vain;
Surveys his fears, and at his dangers grieves,
But scarce his boasts or cowardice believes.

So when two kings, for perfidy or right,
In glitt'ring arms meet on the plains to fight, 990
If one be by his minister betray'd,
Or seiz'd by foes, it makes his hosts afraid.
Scatter'd, confus'd, they flee themselves to hide,
And brave and worthless mingle with the tide.
But if with these, some kinsman to the throne,
In war expert, in triumphs hoary grown, 996
Be hurried thence, he leaves the vulgar mass,
And gains a post near some defile or pass,

Looks on his sword and blushes,—musing stands,
Then views his ensigns and victorious hands ;
Rallies and fights till all his guards are gone,
Raves and falls back, and shakes as he goes on.

Straightway our Saviour to the hall they bear,
And with rude scoffs and blows torment him there ;
Spit in his face, insult him with their jokes, 1005
And bruise his flesh with their remorseless strokes ;
Make him of wretches the obnoxious theme,
Who pluck his hairs, deride him, and blaspheme.
Such guards the King of heaven and earth attend,
And none but John avow'd himself his friend.
Even he at first departed with the rest, 1011
But soon in tears his captive Lord confess'd ;
Faces the throng, and pleads in his defence,
And boldly vindicates his innocence.

Cephas, who slowly follow'd in the rear, 1015
Mov'd on, a captive to his guilty fear ;
And, with the mob, as conscious of his fall,
Contriv'd to pass into the public hall.
While here, he seem'd solicitous to hide
His guilty face from his once-honor'd guide. 1020

At length detected by suspicious care,
The porter asks him—" If he was not there?"
Adding—" As well as memory can trace,
" In yonder garden I beheld thy face."
" Him till this hour I never saw or knew,"
Peter replied, and suddenly withdrew. 1025
His fears the fall'n apostle still detect,
And the same cause produc'd the same effect.
Charg'd home again, he gives the same replies,
And all as firmly as before denies. 1030
The third who came and ventur'd to accuse,
Observ'd his idiom diff'rent from the Jews,
And hence conjectur'd, or presum'd, that " he
" Was doubtless bred in factious Galilee,"
Press'd with this question, Peter curs'd and swore,
And thought from hence they would suspect no
more ; 1036
For no true christian, perfectly they knew,
Would speak such words, or swear to things untrue.

Scarce had his perjurd lips these accents borne,
Ere twice the bird of dawn proclaim'd the morn.
The Saviour turn'd, and hapless Cephas, by, 1041
Caught with a glance the lightning of his eye,

He did no more, nor more did Peter need ;
His contrite heart, thus pierc'd, began to bleed.
Within their banks his tears refus'd to stay, 1045
Or shut their sluices till the coming day :
His bursting woes, refusing all controul,
Sought a recess to ease his wounded soul.
Deep in the shades his foul revolt he mourn'd,
And all the passions in full tide return'd. 1050
Anguish, affection, hope, remorse, and grief,
Demanded time to give his soul relief.
Remote from man, he pour'd his bitter moans,
And the dark desert echoed to his groans :
Prone on the earth, he heav'd repentant sighs,
And gave full vent to his dissolving eyes. 1056
Indulgent Heav'n, perceiving all his woes,
Pardon'd his crime, and gave him some repose ;
Forgave the language which his tears deplore,
And wash'd his bosom whiter than before. 1060

Meanwhile the guiltless criminal was brought,
Bound, to that council which his murder sought ;
To grace their deeds they sought some fair pretence,
But could not find one specious evidence. 1064
All arts they use ; now this, now that they try ;
Now charge with treason, now with blasphemy.

To prove these points, they shamefully suborn
Some perjur'd wretches for their purpose sworn;
But these equivocate, and fall to strife,
And nothing witness that could reach his life. 1070
Enrag'd, the wicked Caiaphas arose,
Whose thirst for blood, each word and action
shows :

In every line of his distorted face
Fell murder lurk'd, revengeful, mean, and base:
“ How long must we on this impostor wait ?”
Foaming he cries;—“ Confess, and meet thy fate.”
“ Thy blasphemies, thy treasons quickly show,
“ Nor aim to cover what thy judges know.
“ Since proof appears—with speed acknowledge all,
“ And ask for mercy from this public hall. 1080
“ Aim'st thou to pull the Roman ensigns down ?
“ To seize the temple, and consume the town ?
“ When did sedition last patrol the street ?
“ Or thy cabal, to plot in secret, meet ?”

To these base falsehoods Jesus Christ replies
Without resentment, “ Well may I despise
“ Such calumnies as thou must disbelieve;
“ But since thou probably wilt not receive

“ Truth from my lips, I earnestly desire

“ That thou of those who heard me wouldst
inquire; 1090

“ And let their answers, fairly ask'd and giv'n,

“Decide the question in the face of Heaven.

" Secret cabals I never lov'd nor sought,

" Nor dang'rous doctrines in retirement taught ;

“ My words the synagogues and temple know ;

"Let these my blasphemy and treason show."

On this, a soldier of the Jewish race 1097

Lifts his rude hand, and strikes his heavenly face ;

And with these words accompanies his blow:—

"Answer'st thou then the sov'reign Pontiff so?"

Our Lord, whose patience stood unconquer'd still,
Asks, what he said "indecent, false, or ill?"

"If well, why have I such hard measure found,

“ Struck uncondemn’d in open court, and bound ? ”

The Pontiff, seeing that his deep-laid schemes 1105

Mock'd his designs, and baffled all his aims,—

A new expedient to our Lord address'd,

To force the fatal secret from his breast.

"Art thou the sacred Promis'd Seed," he said,

“ From ages doom’d to bruise the serpent’s
head ;

“ The destin’d Prince for Israel’s mighty throne ?

“ If so, no longer thy descent disown.

“ By our conceal’d unutterable name,

“ With whom thou dost a doubtful kindred
claim, 1114

“ Speak, I adjure thee, and the work is done ;

“ Art thou the Christ, the Father’s only Son ?”

“ Although,” said Christ, “ thy whole design
I take,

“ And know what uses thou intend’st to make

“ Of my confession, I will not deny

“ My state, or name, or kindred in the sky. 1120

“ He, whom ye view with such indignant scorn,

“ A mortal man to your tribunal borne,

“ Shall, high enthron’d, in boundless light and
bliss,

“ Command his judges to appear at His.” 1124

With wicked joy, “ ’Tis past,” the Pontiff cried,

“ And you, my fathers, must his fate decide.

“ O that his doating followers were but near,

“ His own’d, his public blasphemies to hear !

“ The fact is plain, if sense itself be true,

“ And justice has but simple work to do. 1130


“ On doubtful points opinions may divide,
“ But demonstration here becomes your guide,
“ Points out the bias which your mind should take,
“ And guarantees the judgment which you make.”

Matur'd in guilt, their suffrage rends the skies ;
“ Yes, the blasphemer dies,” they cry, “ he dies.”
The court adjourn'd, to Pilate's palace went,
Mix'd with the crowd, to blast the innocent ;
By secret tricks the public mind divide, 1139
And practise arts to gain them to their side.
Dust crowns their heads, their shouts assail the air,
And thence with many a curse our patient Lord
they bear.

CONTENTS

OF THE

NINTH BOOK.



THIS book begins with a complaint, that virtue is generally miserable in this world : which is silenced by the instance of the sufferings of our Saviour, though perfect Purity and Innocence : who is accused before Pilate by the High Priest and elders ; but, nothing being proved against him, the governor would have acquitted him. The rabble, excited by the Priests, are eager for his death. Pilate, hoping to divert them, hearing he was a Galilean, sends him to Herod ; who, on his silence, despises, derides, and returns him to the Governor : whose wife, having had a terrible vision relating to him, sends to her husband, by no means to concern himself in his death : on which he laboured to deliver him, offering the Jews to give them his life, as was usual at the Passover ; but they refused it, and asked Barabbas, a robber and murderer ; and, by their repeated tumults, and insinuations that unless Pilate would grant their desire he must be disloyal to Cæsar, they at last prevail, and our Lord is scourged and condemned. He is mocked by the soldiers, crowned with thorns, and, bearing his cross, dragged to execution. Judas's remorse ; he hangs himself. Jesus's advice to the Matrons of Je-

rusalem, in his passage through the dolorous way ; where he faints under his cross ; and Simon, coming by, is compelled to assist him. Arrived at Calvary, he is crucified between two malefactors. The Blessed Virgin, hearing the rumour of her son's being taken by the rabble, follows him to Calvary ; and, finding him there, swoons at the sight. She is recovered by the soldiers. Her lamentation for the death of her son : who, being moved with her sorrow, speaks to her from the cross ; and commends her to the care of his friend, St. John, who stood near him. The discourse of the two thieves with our Saviour. The prodigies at Jerusalem. Our Saviour's exclamation on the cross, under the sense of God's anger for the sins of the world. The angels in heaven enraged to see their Master thus used, one of them gives the signal of war ; Michael appears at their head, and they are all ready to descend to his rescue, and destroy the world. God the Father represses their anger ; and shew^s them that it was necessary that our Lord should die for the sins of man : at which being appeased, they return to their usual posts and employments. Our Saviour's last agonies, his thirst, receiving the vinegar, and yielding up the ghost.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

BOOK IX.

Q WHY was virtue made to be distress'd?
 Like Noah's Dove, no place of ease or rest
 In this tumultuous world she ever found,
 By fortune's giddy impulse dragg'd around;
 And sometimes crush'd on the relentless ground.
 Her best-lov'd children meanly, humbly, go,
 Friendless and poor, contemptible and low;
 Expos'd to pinching want and sharper shame:
 "O what is virtue, but an empty name!"

L. 9. O what is virtue, but an empty name ?] I hope I need not tell the reader, that these lines are only an objection commonly brought against Providence; which is, I think, afterwards fully answered. As for the exclamation, *What is virtue, &c.* it is a common saying among the ancient Heathens, and is ascribed to several authors; though I think the most fix it-upon Hercules, as extorted from

Presumptuous thoughts! may these no more
pretend 10

To blast a name they cannot comprehend!

This gloomy stage on which our lot is cast

Is not a drama that will always last :

The way of Heaven, so exquisitely laid,

Reveals but part, and wraps that part in shade. 15

Worlds unexplor'd must first become our guide,

Before our reason fully can decide.

On views of sense our erring fancies stray,

Nor look through darkness into future day :

Hence folly leads us, when our gaze is o'er, 20

To fix our tents on this terrestrial shore.

But when the prospect in full bloom appears

Beyond the circle of revolving years,

We see that virtue was not made in vain,

However some may suffer or complain. 25

him, when frying and raving on Mount Oeta, by the extremity of his pain; which if true, he is far from being so heroical as he is represented, since it is not killing of bulls and bears, and robbers, but inflexible virtue, patience and magnanimity under the worst of evils, that make a true hero. However, as one of our own writers pleasantly observes, it is most likely to be his expression, because it looks so much like the speech of a madman.

Who would not then resign short joys, to find
An endless train of happiness behind?

But flesh and blood, still discontented, mourn,
And impious murmurs in full tide return.

They ask, if all this earthly Paradise 30

Was form'd to gratify and pamper vice?

If honor would not well on good men wear;

And look as decently, and sit as fair,

As on the vicious brow? Be this confess'd;

But virtue is not constantly oppress'd. 35

Eclipses serve to make her shine more bright,

And dress her charms in mingled shade and light.

Should all this fail, there needs but one reply

To pensive spirits—"Did not Jesus die?"—

Jesus, in whom were admirably join'd 40

The purest virtues, and the noblest mind,

The greatest merit and the greatest pain,

And tend'rest love repell'd with worst disdain.

Though acts of mercy all his life display'd

Towards the sick, the healthful, and the dead; 45

Though all mankind did so profusely share

The Maker's bounty, and the Saviour's care,

The throng, ungrateful for the gifts bestow'd,

Pursued his life, and crucified their God.

Unequall'd merit, virtue too sublime, 50
And spotless innocence, was all his crime.
Fame, deathless fame, where'er he went, pursued,
Through every desert, wilderness, and wood.
How oft has he with disproportion'd bread
The wond'ring crowd miraculously fed; 55
Who would have sunk him to an earthly crown
Whom all the bright ethereal kingdoms own,
If he had not perform'd one wonder more,
To shun their kindness, as their rage before;
And, veil'd in clouds too thick for piercing day,
Glided unseen in secret shades away. 61

But when the melancholy hour was come,
And Heav'n resolv'd to call its Lieger home,
See where the Judge of men and angels stands
Before those wretches who confine his hands; 65
Who, like a culprit, to the pillar bind,
And basely scourge, the Saviour of mankind.
The giddy crowd in this tumultuous tide—
That crowd which lately loud Hosannahs cried,—
Now cause their voices to ascend the sky, 70
And in mad concert utter—"Crucify."
On this occasion each his rage express'd,
And us'd exertions to surpass the rest.

The sick in accents dissonant and slow,
And children lately taught to speak and go ; 75
The softer sex, wild youth, and hoary age,
And manly strength, in this vile cause engage ;
The same their malice, and the same their cries ;
The same wild fury, sparkling in their eyes,
Expels soft pity ; mischief fills its place, 80
And murd'rous forms seize each distorted face,
Wild foaming rage, black malice, hatred fell ;
And grinning envy, best-belov'd of hell.
Like furious beasts, themselves and earth they
tear,
And scatter dust, loud bellowing in the air. 85
The real fiends, in mortal figures dress'd,
In close disguise among the rabble press'd :
Their mien, their actions, and their rage the same,
Discover'd no distinction but in name.
These soon perceiv'd that all their work was done,
Nor wanted those their aid to urge them on ; 91
The bloody priests their hellish arts supply,
And plan those schemes by which our Lord should
die.

The sun had scarcely warm'd our upper skies
Before the rout (so early rage can rise !) 95

With imprecations in their morning breath,
Thirsted for blood, and clamour'd for his death.
To Pilate's gate the Son of God they led,
That law, perverted, might pronounce him dead.
There, with loud shouts, the vast pretorium
shakes, 100

And soon the frightened governor awakes.
He calls his guards, and a centurion sent
To learn what this unusual tumult meant.
Amidst a num'rous crowd, with staves and
swords,

And fury arm'd, he heard no other words 105

But "Justice, Justice, let th' impostor die ;
" Justice, Rebellion, Treason, Blasphemy."

The judge descends, and bids his serjeants call
His loud accusers to the judgment-hall ;

They durst not move a step—religious fear 110
Forbade, because the passover was near.

Wretches ! who strain at gnats, at murder smile,
Imagine guiltless blood will not defile !

These whited walls, thus fix'd at Pilate's gate,
Preserv'd their ancient dignity and state. 115

Not they on him, but he on them must wait,
To hear their tales, and speak the voice of fate.

On his approach, he saw with much surprise
The guiltless Hero doom'd a sacrifice ;
He saw the captive ; but, amidst disgrace, 120
Some beams of glory dignified his face.
The Roman trembled, though unus'd to fear ;
His heart presag'd that more than man was near.
Unmov'd he could not his great prisoner see,
But seem'd far more a criminal than he. 125
But while without the priests and rabble stay,
Christ to the hall the Roman guards convey ;
There Pilate asks, but not with stern command,
“ Art thou the destin'd King of Israel's land ;
“ The promis'd Prince, by each prophetic sage
“ Foretold, to usher in the golden age ? 131
“ For we have heard, though from your light
remov'd,
“ His future fame, and, undissembling, lov'd.
“ Of his high deeds Cumean grottoes rung,
“ And Maro's muse has his great plaudits sung.”

L. 134. *Of his high deeds Cumean grottoes rung.*] That there was really some *bottom* in those which are called the Sibylline oracles, relating to our Saviour, I see no room for any modest man to doubt ; though it seems on the other side a clear case, that vast heaps of doggrel Greek have been forged in their imitation, like those

To whom our Lord :—" The Romans need not
fear, 136

" Nor Jews suspect ; my kingdom is not here.

" All earthly power and glory I disdain,

" And only aim in pious hearts to reign ;

" Truth there to plant, and error to remove ; 140

" For this I left my Father's throne above

" For an ungrateful world : this only, I

" Propos'd when born ; for this, contented, die."

Pilate amaz'd, returning to the gate,

Where all confus'd the furious rabble wait, 145

bastard medals so common in the world. The Christians could not feign that of Tully, which I think he applies to King Ptolemy, of a king to come out of the eastern countries ; any more than several passages of Virgil's *Sicelides Musæ*, which seem plain transcripts of what the old Prophets have left recorded concerning our Saviour ; which, though it should be granted, he might apply to the son of Pollio ; yet there is little doubt but he had them from the Sibyls, or some tradition then current among the heathens ; though he, too, as well as Balaam, might be acted beyond himself ; for, in my judgment, he does here *majora canere*, *sing of greater things*, as he has promised ; nothing being comparable to it in all his works, not excepting the prophecy of Marcellus, or if there is any thing finer in his beautiful *Æneids*.

Heard all their voices for destruction call,
 Alike enrag'd, the vulgar great and small.
 Unmov'd and firm the governor remain'd,
 And ask'd of what so loudly they complain'd ?
 What crime so high, the prisoner could alone 150
 By such a death his mighty guilt atone ?
 Since all their tumults no discoveries made,
 Nor had his answers any guilt betray'd ;
 Nor must the guiltless be by noise oppress'd,
 —“ Let one accuse—be silent all the rest.” 155

He said ; when straight, advancing from the
 crowd,

In haughty pomp came Caiaphas the proud ;
 Supplying want of reason, truth, and sense,
 With a firm brow and pompous eloquence ;
 And thus began : “ We highly are content 160
 “ To plead our cause, illustrious president,
 “ At thy tribunal ; since we cannot fear
 “ To find that justice which is always here.
 “ No venial crime so great a concourse draws
 “ Against this wretch who would subvert our
 laws, 165

L. 147. *Alike enrag'd, the vulgar great and small.*
 Cowley's thought.

“ Unhinge our state, our temple overturn,
“ And in unhallow’d fire our altars burn.
“ Since then imperial Rome consents to grant
“ Whatever prudence may demand or want ;
“ To let her sons and conquer’d nations use 170
“ Their own religious rites ; and since the Jews
“ Unanimous and loud for justice cry,
“ And all demand that this blasphemer die,
“ As he deserves ; we cannot once suspect 174
“ Great Pontius will our joint desires neglect :
“ Then let him die, whose infamous design
“ Is, by the world to be esteem’d divine.
“ Let the impostor die ; we ask it all ;
“ Nor can our altars stand unless he fall.” 179

He said : th’ applauding people gave consent,
And with loud shouts the wide Pretorium rent.
But Pilate, firm, perceiv’d that envious rage
Led them against his pris’ner to engage ;
For he had long remark’d Christ’s sacred law,
And spotless life, nor aught offensive saw— 185
Aught that the Roman jealousy could move ;
His life was goodness, and his law was love.

Patient and meek th’ expecting victim lies,
As lambs when bound appear for sacrifice.

His voice unheard, no loud complaints express'd
To ease the inward anguish of his breast, 191
No murmuring words, or sounds of discontent,
But all resign'd, he to the altar went :
Nor was their fire the more by this allay'd ;
His silent meekness did their rage upbraid : 195
With their hoarse voice they assail the sky,
“ Let that curs'd Galilean rebel die.
“ Through all the land he wild sedition sows,
“ Which, spreading wide, a dreadful harvest
shows
“ In these remote rebellious fields.’ “ Is he,” 200
Pilate abruptly asks, “ of Galilee ?
“ Know then that this your celebrated feast
“ Has to the city brought a royal guest,
“ Herod himself : we must not interfere ;
“ To him my guards the criminal shall bear ;
“ You, fathers, follow and accuse him there.” }
The mob retiring, half refuse to stay
For forms of law, and curse this dull delay.

Herod, with joy, the Saviour bound receiv'd,
And long'd to witness what he disbeliev'd ; 210
Hop'd to indulge his curiosity ;
Some mighty work or glorious sign to see

By the great prophet wrought ; but ask'd in vain,
His birth, his life, his mission, and his reign ;
How his authority from Heaven he prov'd ; 215
What crimes the citizens against him mov'd ?
Christ silent stood : not so the barbarous crowd,
Who urge their suit with clamours fierce and loud :
Him, with rebellion, they in concert charge,
And crimes too heinous, open, and too large 220
For proof or plea : still calm his looks and mind ;
To his Almighty Father's will resign'd ;
His eyes were fix'd on a superior throne,
And in that court he pleads his cause alone.

“ Is this the man,” the tyrant cries with scorn,
“ Whom fame reports to be our rival born ? 226
“ Unlikely he to overturn a state,
“ Below our vengeance and beneath our hate.
“ Send Heaven no greater foe ! Guards, quickly
bring
“ Our royal robes to deck this doubtful king.”
Herod's commands they readily obey'd, 231
And Christ with speed in royal robes array'd ;

L. 226. *Whom fame reports to be our rival born.*] This Herod was grandson to Herod the Great.

Then mock, despise, before him bend the knee,
And back to Pilate guard his majesty.

The Roman found his stratagem in vain ; 235

The fatal work recurs to him again.

The people throng the gates, and threatening ask,
Or rather urge him, to resume the task.

All arts he tries, persuasion, flattery, fear ;

Now this, now that ; now kind, and then severe ;

But all in vain : one method more remain'd ; 241

But all his efforts no advantage gain'd :

'Twas usual with the Roman clemency,

On days like this to set some prisoner free,

And grace their festal joys. It happen'd then, 245

That one, alike abhorr'd by God and men,

A sturdy rebel of notorious fame,

By murder mark'd, Barabbas was his name,

Secur'd by justice, did in durance wait

The awful hour of his approaching fate. 250

Pilate this wretch presented to the Jews,

And with him Christ,—to know whom they would
choose ;

Since one, whose crimes admitted no defence,

Conferr'd new light on spotless innocence.

The one was peaceable, and mild, and good ; 255

The other factious, and defil'd with blood.

In the strange combat which this contrast made,
 Triumphant virtue all her charms display'd :
 Justice and pity with the throng prevail,
 And priests and elders saw their malice fail. 260
 New charges now among the mob they threw,
 And, ever subtle, mingling false with true,
 Ask'd them, " if those who wickedly contrive
 " To wreck their temple, they would save alive ?
 " If 'twere not height of madness to prefer 265
 " A black blasphemer to a murderer ?"
 By these and hell inspir'd, they louder cry,
 " No, let Barabbas live, and Jesus die."
 The governor again, with anger mov'd, 269
 Demands what actions all their hosts had prov'd,
 Which could affect his life ? While thus they
 strive,
 They to destroy, and he to save alive,
 A lady, of an ancient house and name,
 Unblemish'd virtue, and unspotted fame,
 To him with haste on the tribunal sent, 275
 If not too late, the murder to prevent
 Of one he knew so just and innocent.

L. 274. *Unblemish'd virtue, and unspotted fame.*] Ecclesiastical history tells us, that she was a noble Roman, her name Procula ; afterwards a convert to the christian faith, and, as it is said, a martyr also.

For in a dreadful vision's mystic scene,
She saw some presage of portentous mien ;
She saw the angry skies begin to lower ; 280
She saw the clouds discharge a dreadful shower
Of fire and blood, which in large eddies flow,
And carry ruin to the men below,
Who people some devoted city nigh ; 284
And heard a voice proclaiming from the sky—
“ Forsake this place, which to the sword is given,
“ Since blood for blood must meet the wrath of
Heaven.”

This trembling Pontius heard, and labour'd more
To free his prisoner than he had before :
But all in vain ; for now the waves run high, 290
And rocks and shores and obstacles defy.
Led on by Annas, who had fill'd the chair
Where Moses sat, and did the ephod wear,
The noisy mob once more renew'd the strife,
And boldly clamour'd for the Saviour's life : 295
While Annas, bent to stimulate the gang,
Accosted Pilate with this keen harangue :

“ Shall a weak woman's dreaming fears prevail ;
“ Her sentence stand, and law and justice fail ?

“ Does Rome rule thus? or can that Prefect be
 “ Her friend, who saves her greatest enemy ;—
 “ Who spares the wretch whom we to justice
 bring,
 “ Whom factious crowds so oft have hail’d their
 king?
 “ For this was Cæsar’s Prefect hither sent?
 “ Did he for this obtain the government? 305
 “ Can he thus favour rebels, yet pretend
 “ To rule his province, and be Cæsar’s friend?
 “ Let such base traitors whom they will enthrone;
 “ All other kings but Cæsar we disown.” 309
 Shock’d by this last attack, though firm before,
 The wavering Roman would oppose no more;
 But sunk o’erwhelm’d in the impetuous flood,
 And wash’d, to rid himself of guiltless blood.

Thus, when fair Jordan’s streams their banks
 o’erflow

With rising waters or descending snow, 315

L. 315. *With rising waters or descending snow.*] I believe there are few great rivers, but have more than one head, though the complement of the country generally fixes them at one place. Every learned reader has heard of two heads assigned to the river Jordan, Jor, and Dan, like our Thame and Isis; whence both their names. It may not

The painful husbandman with fruitless toil
Repels their inroads, and protects his soil,
Does to their fury banks and dams oppose :
The angry stream thus check'd still wilder grows ;
Then over all at last resistless pours, 320
And in a moment all his hopes devours ;
While he for life to some near hillock flies,
And to the river turns his weeping eyes ;

be unpleasant to give; once for all, a description of this noble river, the chief of Palestine, and, it is said, some of the best water in the world. The Pilgrim gives the best account of its rise and progress that I have yet seen, Lib. ii. cap. 15. "A une heure de Cæsarea," &c. "An hour's journey from Cæsarea Philippi, at the foot of Mount Libanus (Fuller tells us, it is one particular mount, more pleasant than all the rest, called Paneas), arose two springs of water, one about half an hour's journey from the other. That to the east is called Jor, and the other more northerly, Dan. They soon make two small rivulets, which, running separate about a league and a half, meet at the bottom of the forementioned town, joining at once their names and waters; and from thence taking the new name of Jordan. Thence running by several villages and countries, and separating the lands of Trachonitis, Iturea, and Galilee, the Jordan falls into a valley, where it makes a lake about two leagues in circuit, called Moron or Mora (Merom, in Fuller); by Josephus the Semachonite lake: thence verging towards the east, it enters the sea of Galilee between Capernaum and Chorazin; and passing thence, is at last engulphed in the Dead Sea."

Sees all his stock destroy'd in one short day,
Sees all his envied riches wash'd away ; 325
And beasts, and men, and floating stacks of corn,
And house and household down the current borne.

Thus Pilate strove ; nor longer would engage,
With hopes of conquest, their impetuous rage ;
But in his judgment more correct, than brave, 330
Thus basely honour'd waht he would not save :

“ I find it unavailing to deny
“ Your base demand : the innocent must die ;
“ But know, a speedy vengeance will pursue,
“ And may it light with all its weight on you. 335
“ I wash my hands of this tremendous guilt ;
“ Bear you his blood, by you unjustly spilt.”
They quickly answer, “ We are all content
“ To bear the blood, the guilt, the punishment,
“ We and our children.” Wretched men, you shall,
When your proud towers and boasted temple fall
Beneath their weight ; when justice all divine,
Still sure, though slow, shall perfect Heaven's
design ;
When you, and all who enter at your gates,
Shall swell the carnage which defiles your streets ;

When streams of blood shall through your city flow
Faster than Kidron in the vale below ; 347
Full o'er the torrent will destruction stride,
And death sit crown'd upon the crimson tide.

Nor, wretches ! can your deepest suff'rings pay
For half the crimes of this unhappy day.

Whither, ye traitors, whither will ye bring
Your Sovereign Lord, your Saviour, and your King ;
How many wounds, how many deaths provide ?
See where his hands are to the pillar tied 355

By the rough soldiers : see, at what they do,
The marble seems to weep for him and you.
Behold those furrows on his shoulders plough'd ;
What drops, what rivulets, what streams of blood !
Hark ! through the hall repeated strokes resound
To work our cure, while him they deeply wound—
While he with patience all his suff'rings bears,
And melts or tires his executioners.

O King of heaven, thy guiltless offspring spare,
Nor once inflict what only God can bear ! 365
Had we not better suffer endless pain.

Than Christ these woes ? O break the cursed chain ;
Like Sampson, snap those cords his arms disgrace,
And scatter vengeance through the faithless race :

Let rays of lightning guard his sacred head, 370
Or bolts of thunder strike these wretches dead.

Ah, no ! too well he knew the price he gave :
Not him their death, but his the world must save.
And could our woes so far thy pity move ? 374
How great thy pity, and how strong thy love !
Thy stronger mercy, justice stern obeys ;
Pity thy power, and love thy vengeance sways.
This hast thou done to gain thy rebels grace ;
Yet much remains of thy horrific race,
Scourg'd, mock'd, and crown'd with thorns, which
pierc'd and tore 380
His sacred head, and drench'd his limbs in gore ;
A reed these rebels for a sceptre bring,
And in mock robes insult, and hail him king.

Though tir'd with insults, which the Saviour bore,
The bloody priests still hunted after more : 385
Infernal rage fill'd each ferocious breast,
And stole the remnants of their savage rest.
Their barbarous spirits, which demanded blood,
Soon spread contagion through the vulgar crowd :
The furious rabble would no longer stay, 390
But their mock sovereign drag to death away.

The soldiers then the fatal cross prepare,
Which Christ, though wounded, they compel to
bear ;

Who sinks, and faints, beneath the cursed load,
Through past fatigue, and wounds, and loss of blood.

Nor was the tree on our behalf refus'd, 396

Nor yet that death, for slaves and villains us'd.

Exhausted nature sinks as they convey

Christ to more pains, along the doleful way ;

Where, with that blood which still remain'd

behind, 400

He made an expiation for mankind.

It happen'd thus; while Christ, beneath the load,

Crush'd to the earth, lay panting on the road,—

That perjur'd Judas, restless, thither stray'd,—

The wretch who basely had his Lord betray'd,—

By chance, or rather by those furies sent, 406

Which first mankind delude, and then torment.

L. 397. *Nor yet that death, for slaves and villains us'd.*] Tacitus calls it *servile supplicium*, a servile sort of punishment, not to be inflicted on any Roman citizen; and therefore, we find in history, that St. Paul, who was a Roman, had the benefit of that liberty, and was beheaded; while St. Peter, a Jew, was crucified.

He saw the people's madness, heard their cry,
Beheld his Master bound, and doom'd to die.
Now racking thoughts his guilty soul pursue, 410
And what was done direct him to undo.
Now all too late ! What pains reflection brings,
What wounds, what deaths, what vultures, racks,
and stings !

Hurried by these, he to the Elders goes,
And at their feet the fatal silver throws : 415
“ Retake the price of blood,” he wildly said,
“ For which my guiltless Saviour I betray'd ;
“ Now mine no more : alas ! these bitter stings.
“ Create remorse which all my vitals wrings.
“ Behold he dies, the innocent and good ; 420
“ My guilty soul betray'd his guiltless blood.
“ O cursed merchants, O detested gold,
“ O wretched priests, to buy what Judas sold !
“ New horrors rise when I repeat his name,
“ And hell must ease me with its hottest flame.”

The priests with smiles this cold reply afford,
“ A worthless servant suits a worthless Lord ;
“ Whom if he thinks he wrongfully betray'd,
“ Look he to that—his price was justly paid.”

Iscariot heard, and blindly rushes where 430

His guilty conscience goads him to despair.

To Heaven he durst not look ; his heinous sin

Had clouded that, and hell burnt hot within.

With eyes all glaring he survey'd the ground,

And look'd with horror on the skies around ; 435

Beheld the light, and curs'd it as it shone,

And in these strains address'd the rising sun,

Which seem'd to shudder at the awful sight,

And blush'd upon him with his angry light :

“ Perish for ever, O thou hated light, 440

“ And sink like me in everlasting night !

“ Why dost thou yet thy beauteous beams afford

“ To that curs'd city where I sold my Lord,

“ My injur'd Lord ! and now lament in vain

“ That God and conscience were exchang'd for
gain— 445

“ *That* God whom conscience taught me to esteem :

“ 'Twas there myself I damn'd, and murder'd Him.

“ O whither shall a wretch so guilty run ?

“ I plunge in hell, the hell I feel to shun.

“ My load of torment to escape, shall I 450

“ To my betray'd, my injur'd Master fly,

“ Fall at his feet, and for, and with him die ?

- “ Perhaps to pity he may still incline ;
“ He must be touch’d with miseries like mine.
“ O hasten, Judas; go without delay ; 455
“ He never yet a suppliant turn’d away,
“ Nor will he thee. No, faithless traitor, no,
“ The door is shut ; thou must not, canst not go :
“ His beams of mercy Judas cannot bear ;
“ His hottest vengeance would be less severe :
“ A secret something says, I must not live ; 461
“ My guilt would haunt me, though my Lord
 forgive.
“ Shall I, alas, to distant regions go,
“ To quench this torment and divert my woe,
“ Through unknown seas, or tracts of burning
 sand, 465
“ Or snowy mountains which conceal the land—
“ Visit the southern or the northern pole,
“ Where winds can carry, or where waves can roll;
“ Where the ten tribes, vast seas and deserts cross’d,
“ In climes unknown and heathen lands are lost ?

L. 468. *Where winds can carry, or where waves can roll.*] I think this is a verse of Mr. Waller’s.

L. 469. *Where the ten tribes, vast seas and deserts cross’d.*] There is a great dispute, whither the ten tribes were

“ Bear me with speed, some courteous whirlwind,
bear

“ Where ease resides ; I ask not how, or where ?

carried; which, perhaps, will never be decided, as the Jews say of any great difficulty, till Elias come. Esdras says, they went over Euphrates, which was miraculously dried up for their passage, and, after a fair walk for a year and a half, arrived at Arsareth, which some suppose to be Tartary ; where, also, many of our moderns think they have found them ; there being a city named Tabor in that country, as there are several of that name in Naphthali, whence some of them were carried. Others tell us, that there are a sort of people among the Tartars, who run about the fields a certain day in the year, making great lamentation, though they themselves have forgot the reason, and repeating with violent and dismal ejaculations these words, Jeru ! Jeru ! Salem ! Jeru ! Damas ! though they do not understand them ; retaining still the names of those places, though they have lost the history. Others think, that the Indians of America, or at least some part of them, are the posterity of the ten tribes ; which is rendered not altogether improbable from several Jewish customs found among them. And what if those Tartarians, adverted to above, conducted by Satan from their own country over to America, should be some of those very Jews, whom the enemy of man, and ape of God, might take a pride in leading to his Canaan, almost exactly in the same manner as Moses led their forefathers out of Egypt ? Acosta has a strange story that looks very much like this, from a tradition of the Americans ; “ That their
“ god Vitziliputzli commanded their forefathers to leave
“ the place where they had then lived ; promising them,
“ if they would follow him, a much more happy country
“ by the destruction of several nations which possessed it.
“ Accordingly they departed, carrying this their idol with

“ But guilt, alas ! would with its author go,
“ And banish quiet which he longs to know.
“ The image of my crimes would still pursue, 475
“ My whips, my racks, my plague, my hell renew—
“ Like Cain, a mark for every murderer made,
“ And closely haunted by my Master’s shade.
“ His injur’d ghost beyond myself I fear ;
“ Guard me, ye fiends, for ’tis already here. 480
“ Bloody, yet pale, I see his open side ;
“ O earth ! the culprit in thy caverns hide :
“ And O, conceal within thy darkest room
“ A wretch that envies happier Dathan’s doom.

“ them in an ark of reeds, which was supported by four
“ of their chief priests, with whom he discoursed in
“ secret, and revealed to them all along the different
“ successes of their journey, giving them orders when to
“ march and to halt, which they were not to do without
“ his order. Wherever they came, they erected a taber-
“ nacle for their god in the midst of their camp,
“ placing the ark upon an altar. When they were tired
“ with their journey, and resolved to proceed no farther,
“ their god destroyed many of them in a dreadful manner ;
“ continuing to condu t them till he brought them to
“ Mexico.” I shall only add, that Manasseh-Ben
Israel, a modern Jew, tells us, “ There were lately found,
“ encompassed by several mountains in America, a white
“ people with long beards, whom he would fain have to
“ be the remainder of these ten tribes, and all natural
“ Jews.”

“ Wider, ye gentle furies, wider tear 485
“ This burning breast; let not your vipers spare
“ This tortur’d heart: these worms which never die,
“ My claims on vengeance cannot satisfy :
“ I yet want more (in vain does Judas call 489
“ On heaven or hell; they full and glutted crawl:
“ Yet still I breathe: O why does vengeance spare
“ A hellish culprit who invokes despair ?
“ Take me at once: but why this dull delay ?
“ What hope, or fear, yet makes me lingering
 stay ?” 494
‘ *Die, traitor,*’ Demons whisper’d, “ *Die? but how?*”
Iscariot ask’d; when straight a straggling bough,
Thrust from a blasted elder’s trunk, he spied;
On which with speed the fatal knot he tied;
Then clambering to the top despairing cried,
Upon the margin of the flaming tide, 500
‘ *Die, traitor, die,* the worst I then shall know,’
And headlong launches into flames below:

L. 497. *Thrust from a blasted elder’s trunk, he spied.*] Some say it was a wild fig-tree, but it is no great matter which of the two. Surius says, “ that the Jews have now a church-yard, or burying-place, on that very piece of ground; about the middle whereof, tradition tells them, this tree formerly stood.”

Ghastly in death his fiery eyeballs roll,
And laughing devils seize his parting soul.

Meanwhile the wicked rout his crimes pursue,
And what his treason left unfinish'd, do ; 506
The Lord of life to cruel death convey,
Who, as we saw, had fainted in the way:
While here a traveller from Cyrene came,
Obscure and friendless,—Simon was his name :
With barbarous mercy him they forc'd to bear
The weighty cross. And a proportion'd share
Is every christian's lot, as well as his,
—Through grief to joy—through pain they reach
to bliss.

Among the myriads who his death attend, 515
Jesus, arriving near his journey's end,
Cover'd with blood, fair Salem's matrons see
Ascending to the top of Calvary.
His soul with grief, with stripes his body rent,
They see, and sigh, and all his woes lament. 520
Their tears and sighs to him were not unknown,
Who carries all our sorrows as his own.

“ Keep, matrons, keep your briny tears,” he cries;
 “ For your own sorrows keep those flowing eyes :
 “ Weep for yourselves, and children yet more
 dear ;

“ For now the day; the dreadful day, is near,
“ By Heaven’s just vengeance on your nation
brought,

“ When barren wombs a blessing shall be thought;
 “ When tender nature shall be thrown aside,
 “ And savage hunger shall become your guide—
 “ Urge you to seize without a single groan 531
 “ Your infants’ lives, to lengthen out your own ;
 “ When through your gates fierce hostile troops
 shall pour ;
 “ And what you leave, the greedy sword devour.”

He said ; and now with sweat, and blood, and pain,
The top of fatal Golgotha they gain ; 536
A loathsome scene of murder and despair,
Fit for the tragedies transacting there ;
With skulls, and bones, and putrid limbs o'erspread,
And all the ghastly ruins of the dead. 540
Here disembowell'd bodies thrown around,
With nauseous gore had drench'd the thirsty ground.

There half-torn carcasses unburied lay,
To each ill omen'd bird a feast by day,
By night to howling wolves a welcome prey. 545
Th' accursed wood now laid in order there,
The cross he lately bore, must Jesus bear.
His humble robes from his fresh wounds they
draw,

And leave the stripes discolour'd, bruis'd, and raw;
His bloody clothes the soldiers then divide, 550
All but his vesture, which their lots decide.
This having done, they will no longer stay,
But straight the victim on the altar lay.
His spotless limbs they on the wood distend,
Which their huge spikes unmercifully rend; 555
His hands and feet, with many a sounding stroke,
Nail'd to the timber, were deform'd and broke ;
So wide the wounds his tenderest muscles tore,
That Jewish rage could find no room for more.
His mangled body fasten'd to the wood, 560
Which with the nails was now distain'd with
blood,

The Roman soldiers lift erect in air,
And make the nails by perforations tear.

L. 562. *The Roman soldiers lift erect in air.*] I know many are of opinion, that there was a sort of a Suppeda-

By these alone his injur'd limbs were stay'd ;
On these alone the sinking world was laid : 565
And, while these nails sustain his hands and feet,
Justice and mercy kiss their points, and meet.

The Saviour thus transfix'd, and rais'd on high,
With loud acclaim the rabble rend the sky.

neum, a stay or footstool, on the cross, as a rest to the bodies of malefactors ; but others, and I think the most, being of another mind, I had liberty of choosing which I pleased ; especially, as the former opinion is grounded on a false supposition, that, without some such support as this, the body could not hang in the air, but would tear out the wounds by which it was fastened, and be borne down by its own weight : whereas, we are assured of the contrary, both by considering the strength of the muscles in those parts, and accidental examples of such as, falling from on high, have been caught by the hand, arm, &c. by some tenter, and remained a considerable time in that posture ; and by the manner of that horrible punishment, at this time in use among the Turks and Moors, who throw condemned persons from a high tower stuck full of hooks and tenters, which, catching hold of the body in its fall, retain it there, where the poor wretches must hang till either the wound kills them, or they are starved to death. Now, if the whole weight of a man's body (caught thus at disadvantage, with the fall besides considered) cannot tear itself off when thus hung in the air, how much less would it do so when supported behind, and fastened so evenly and proportionably by the most strong and muscular parts thereof ? O what infinite love was manifested here by our adorable Lord.

Him, priests and people with lewd scoffs assail,
And thus exclaim—"Great king of Jewry, hail!"
(For on the cross, this title o'er his head, 572
As Pilate wrote, in various tongues was read.)—
"Hail, wond'rous King! wilt thou not leave thy
throne?

"Descend from thence, thou shalt not reign alone;

"To past exploits add but one wonder more,

"And rescue him who rais'd the dead before!

"So thee our king we gladly will receive,

"So thee the promis'd prophet yet believe."

All this and more our Saviour mildly bears, 580

And prays for mercy on his murderers.

More must thou feel, O boundless suffering Love,

From the rude crowd below, and thieves above—

Those thieves, each mounted on his cursed tree,

And groaning there, O how unlike to thee! 585

L. 572. *For on the cross, this title o'er his head.*] The piece of wood whereon the title was written, was one part of the cross, called in Greek Τίτλος, from the Latin Titulus; as, on the contrary, the writing itself containing the person's real or supposed crimes, the Roman authors call by a Greek name, Elogium; though, as we take that word now, it seems but an odd sort of an elegy.

Yet one some traits of modesty retains,
For keen contrition in his face remains ;
Amidst his tortures he his guilt deplores,
And feels his crimes more pungent than his sores.
His fellow thief had greater progress made, 590
For crime with him had harden'd into trade ;
He seem'd a villain of no mean degree,
Of standing fame and ancient pedigree.
He many years did robbery profess,
And had to science rais'd his wickedness— 595

L. 586. *Yet one some traits of modesty retains.*] It is thought by many, that this was no hardened villain, but newly entered on his trade. There is one passage in the history of these thieves, which carries some difficulty in it : it is said in St. Matthew and St. Mark, that the thieves (in the plural number) reviled our Saviour. But St. Luke gives the history as here related ; that one did it, and the other rebuked him. Some say, that both did it at first, but one repented, which is a probable solution ; but I think there is a better—that it is a common elliptical way of speaking with the Hebrews. Thus Saul to David, 1 Sam. xviii. 21. Thou shalt this day be my son-in-law in the one of the twain. We render it undoubtedly according to the true sense ; but it is in the original, by, or in the two ; a plain instance of two used for one, as in the present case: so again ; it is written in the prophets, one of the prophets ; and in other instances. The impenitent thief then reviled our Saviour ; the penitent thief prayed to him, and no doubt was immediately happy with him.

Stood on his honour and his well-born race,
Nor by repentance would his name disgrace.
Stern gloomy guilt his countenance deform'd,
And in their turns the angry passions storm'd :
Thus all enrag'd he curs'd both God and man, 600
And to our Saviour, grinning, thus began :

“ Hear'st thou their taunts, and canst thou all
endure,

“ We tortur'd here, and they beneath secure ?
“ Now, if thou canst, thy boasted power display,
“ And from these pains thyself and us convey. 605
“ Or is thy tale of Deity a boast,
“ And now, detected, on the gibbet lost ?
“ No power divine appears to ease thy pain ;
“ Approaching death seems the Messiah's reign ;
“ Thy present state unveils thy impious fraud ;—
“ It shows the culprit, but conceals the God !”

To him, the other from the distant side,
With shame, and decent blushes, thus replied :

“ Why nam'st thou God, whom yet thou dost not
fear, 614
“ Whose steady vengeance overtakes us here ?

“ Here for our crimes we justly bleed—but He,
“ Without our crimes, sustains more woes than we :”
Then turning to our Lord his fainting head,
With tears of sorrow thus devoutly said : 619
“ O thou, who ev’n upon the cross dost reign,
“ I ask not rescue from disgrace and pain,
“ These I deserve—but my petition is,
“ That, when enthron’d in everlasting bliss,
“ Thou wouldst remember my unworthy prayer :—
“ My guilty spirit, wandering in the air, 625
“ To Abraham’s bosom let the angels bear.” }

To him, with love and pity in his eyes,
Our dying Lord amidst his pains replies :—
“ Repentant soul, dismiss thy anxious fear,
“ I’ll own thee there, since thou hast own’d me
here. 630
“ This happy day thy soul shall mount the skies,
“ And with thy Saviour reign in Paradise.”

Amid these scenes malicious fame convey’d
The cruel tidings to the sacred Maid ;—
That, by false Judas, for unholy gold, 635
His honour’d Master had been basely sold ;—

That her lov'd Son had been condemn'd to die,
And was by soldiers dragg'd to Calvary.
Ye tender mothers who her story read,
Guess' what she thought, and felt, and did, and
said ! 640

For though resign'd, yet nature would complain,
And utter groans from intellectual pain.
By grief behold the Virgin hurried on,
To view once more and clasp her dying Son,
To sooth his pains, to wipe his bloody face, 645
And by partaking lessen his disgrace.

Thus Philomel repeats her mournful song,
When basely plunder'd of her tender young ;
Does near the place where first she lost them, wait,
And, fluttering round the tree, lament their fate ;
And, though of their recov'ry she despairs, 651
With loud complaints pursues the ravishers.
Thus the bless'd Maid on love's swift wings did fly
Through hostile ranks to fatal Calvary.

On her approach, the brutal guards in vain 655
Retard those steps which she repeats with pain.
Midst groves of swords the pious Virgin press'd,
And glittering halberts pointed at her breast :

So deep the wounds imprinted there before,
She could sustain and apprehend no more. 660
At length arriving near th' accursed tree,
With shrieks of horror she exclaim'd—" 'Tis
He,"——

Then sunk to earth ; nor could she longer bear
The dreadful sight which death presented there.
With cruel pity her the guards revive ; 665
She wakes, and sighs to find herself alive.
To the dire tree her feet did swiftly run,
On whose tall top she saw her bleeding Son :
Now in wild grief the cross she does embrace,
And the dull stock press to her tortur'd face. 670
His blood descending mingled with her tears,
Which seem'd less likely to be his than her's.
Paler than his her lovely visage stood,
Except those parts which had been dyed with blood.
In both their hearts the current seem'd congeal'd,
And ebbing life in both had almost fail'd.
Christ on his Cross beheld her woes, and mourn'd,
And felt new anguish as her bowels yearn'd ;——
Felt soft affection through his torments move,
Nor even in death resign'd his filial love : 680
His eyes depress'd with pain, and dying head,
Once more he slowly rais'd, and thus he said :

“ Lament no more ; let every thought be still,
“ Nor aim to thwart my Heav’nly Father’s will.
“ I, though remov’d, will for thy safety care, 685
“ And guard thy steps from every tempting snare.
“ My faithful friend, who, weeping near the cross,
“ Deeply deplores his own and Master’s loss,
“ Shall be thy guide ; confide in him, and see
“ In this my friend, a substitute for me.” 690
He said, and turn’d from Mary, and the rest,
To that disciple, whom he thus address’d :
“ As thou in life my friendship didst partake,
“ Nor dost in death thy suffering Lord forsake,
“ Hear his request ere he resigns his breath, 695
“ And sinks to stiffen in the arms of death :
“ Behold thy mother, deem her always thine,
“ And yield to her that friendship which was mine;
“ Of our true friendship this dear pledge receive,
“ The last that thou canst take, or I can give.”
He heard, assenting to his pleasing doom, 701
And from that hour remov’d her to his home.

The Virgin heard ; and feeling all her loss,
Again knelt down close to the bloody cross :
Big swell’d her heart, unable to lament, 705
Till tired nature gave her sorrow vent ;

When thus she mourns, “ Is this the kingdom
given ?

“ Is this the throne to bear the Heir of Heaven ?

“ Must subjects thus their monarch entertain ?

“ And is Messiah thus on earth to reign ? 710

“ For this did God's great messenger descend ?

“ For this the hymning heavenly host attend,

“ And hail thy birth with miracles ? O why

“ Was this vain pomp for one condemn'd to die—

“ Die like the worst of men, of deaths the worst,

“ On slaves inflicted, and pronounc'd accurs'd ?

“ With joy, my Son, I could thy hearse attend,

“ Hadst thou in triumph made a glorious end ;

“ At least the honour had the grief allay'd,

“ For Israel's praises had thy wrongs repaid, 720

“ And made thee live again, hadst thou but broke,

“ Like Sampson, with thy death, the heathen yoke.

“ Too well, alas ! too late the truth I see

“ Of aged Simeon's mystic prophecy.

“ Now through my wounded soul the poignards

glide, 725

“ And wound the mother through her offspring's
side.

“ Why is my grief so weak, or life so strong ?

“ Why must I still these loathsome days prolong ?

“ The strokes of sorrow are like lightning found
“ To blast the soul, but not the body wound. 730
“ O take a life your barbarous pity gives,
“ Let Mary die unless her offspring lives.
“ Or, ere his sands of fleeting life are run,
“ Join her in life or tortures to her Son :
“ Shè only aims to wipe his dying face, 735
“ Heave groan for groan, or perish in his place.”

Thus Mary mourn'd, and some assuasives found,
While with her woes the hills and vales resound.
Her loud complaints the neighbouring brooks
combin'd,
Which in the melancholy chorus join'd. 740
Nay, the mad crowd appear'd convinc'd too late,
And idly mourn'd her lamentable fate.
Echoed the rocks, the senseless marbles moan'd,
And at her pangs the Roman soldiers groan'd.
Each seem'd to weep, or blush, or sigh, or rave,
Or speechless gaze, or some assistance crave ; 746
Their nerveless limbs depriv'd of motion stood,
And burning blushes ting'd their tears with blood.

Meanwhile prodigious darkness clouds the day,
And frighted nature grieves as well as they. 750

The conscious Sun, that could no longer bear
The shocking scene, forsook the widowed air ;
Unnatural clouds obscure his radiant face
When at the midst of his diurnal race.
Th' amaz'd astronomer looks on in vain, 755
Nor can the sight by all his art explain.
He saw the moon her sickly beams display,
In vain attempting to supply the day.
He saw effects from their own causes broke,
And thus to the alarm'd spectators spoke : 760
“ This knot I aim no longer to untie :
“ Nature herself, or nature's God, must die.”

From baleful caves, remov'd from joy and light,
Out sallies primitive substantial night :
As black as that which once on Egypt fell, 765
And quite as full of demons sent from hell.
Unfriendly ghosts and shapeless forms appear,
And dismal shrieks and mournful sounds they hear;
Bellows the earth, in whose imprison'd womb
Pent whirlwinds fight, and rocking earthquakes
come : 770

L. 755. *Th' amaz'd astronomer looks on in vain.*] This is an anecdote sufficiently known, and commonly received and believed.

All nature trembles from some secret word,
And agonizes with her dying Lord.

But most the people of Judea's land,
Some of whom now their errors understand. 774
They knew to whom these prodigies were sent,
And felt what all these dire convulsions meant ;
And now as loud to Heaven for mercy cry,
As late the rabble utter'd "Crucify."
Now maids and matrons in grave order go, 779
And youth and age their trembling bodies throw
Before the temple and its gates with grief,
And weary Heaven soliciting relief :
Here in distress they heave the general groan,
And mourn their country's ruin and their own.
But angry Heaven rejects their impious prayer,
Nor gives one mark that it designs to spare.
The altar shook, the ashes scatter'd lay,
The victim from the temple breaks away,
Or drops beneath the stroke, and bellowing dies ;
In lowering curls, the incense from the skies 790
Returns reluctant to the earth again,
Like clouds of smoke beneath descending rain.

Deep hollow groans from the foundation came ;
From the high roof shot streaks of angry flame ;
The solid pillars trembled, and inclin'd 795
Their lofty heads, as cedars in the wind.

Twice shook the rumbling earth, and thunders
broke

In dreadful peals, succeeding stroke with stroke,
From the vast gulf ; and the third dismal shock
With trebled rage disjoin'd the solid rock, 800
Down to the trembling centre rent the veil,
Leaving expos'd the sacred oracle.

The holy place, unveil'd to vulgar eyes,
Naked and bare without a covering lies ;
The golden lamps appear'd extinguish'd quite, 805
Or only yielded an unnatural light :

L. 800. *With trebled rage disjoin'd the solid rock.*] It is said the rocks rent, in general ; therefore, as it should seem, more than one. Walker says, “ *That of Mount Cal-* ”
“ vary, whereon our Lord suffered, cleft asunder, some ”
“ two or three feet, at the place where his cross was ”
“ fastened, quite from one side of the hill to the other ; to ”
“ be seen at this day, gaping about an hand's breadth, and ”
“ the depth of it not to be sounded.” But the account that the Pilgrim gives of it is very particular, and in these words, “ That what he saw of it was six feet and ”
“ two fingers in length, and about two feet in breadth ; ” adding, “ that it not only reached down as far as the ”
“ chapel of Adam, which is in the hollow of the rock, but ”
“ lower, to the chapel of Invention of the Cross ; its depth ”
“ being unfathomable.”

This by fierce lightnings was more dreadful made,
And frighted priests ran trembling through the
shade.

Meanwhile the Son of God expiring lay
Upon the summit of mount Calvary. 810
A heavier weight than death his soul oppress'd,
And tortur'd, worse than mortal pangs, his breast.
No more the beauteous rays of love divine
Or heavenly glories on his bosom shine ;
It seem'd all horrid like the earth below, 815
Which neither light or comfort could bestow.
He rais'd his eyes which swam in death and night,
As dying lamps before they lose their light ;
Then look'd around for his attendant train,
But awful darkness made him look in vain. 820
His Heavenly Father could no more be seen,
For human crimes were plac'd too thick between.
He asks, as though forgetful of his state,
Crush'd with the world's intolerable weight,
“ Why, if compassion still resides with Thee, 825
“ MY GOD, MY GOD, HAST THOU FORSAKEN
ME ?”

Christ, thus on earth permitted to complain,
Was heard in heaven by all the shining train.

Yet while dominions, hi'rarchies, and thrones,
Felt strange emotions at his dying groans,
Unmov'd the Father heard his suffering Son,
Who by his sov'reign will the whole had done.

The glitt'ring hosts who chaunt their hymns above,
Enjoy with rapture, gaze, adore, and love, 834
Survey'd with pain what gave new feelings birth,
And frown'd indignant on the guilty earth;—
Beheld the anguish of their God below,
And sympathiz'd with his incarnate woe;—
Paus'd in their songs, their heavenly harps threw by,
Or only touch'd with plaintive harmony. 840
At length their music into silence turn'd,
And heavenly warmth in ruddy vengeance burn'd;
Like those fair strangers Lot conducted in,
Who punish'd guilty Sodom's brutish sin.
Among the rest a flaming Seraph saw 845
The vile transactions of the world below.
When trembling Sinai own'd a present God,
And bent in homage to his awful nod,
He blew a trumpet there, and shook the earth,
And call'd strange feelings in mankind to birth.
Each stubborn rebel did his guilt confess; 851
It shook the mount, and shook the wilderness.

He knew his trumpet's powerful sound, and flies
Through worlds unknown and undiscover'd skies ;
Where once the signal was to battle given, 855
By Milton painted, " on the plains of heav'n."
There with his might a powerful blast he blew,
Whose dreadful echo pierc'd all nature through ;
Chaos disturb'd in angry surges fell,
And terrified the Sanhedrim of hell ; 860
While holy Angels at the signal run,
And almost leave their God's commands undone.

Uriel before had left the orb of day,
And seen the planets in disorder stray ; 864
Each wandering sphere stands still, or wildly rolls,
Nor yields obedience to the lawless poles.
A war in heaven appear'd approaching nigh,
And Chaos threaten'd to invade the sky.

L. 862. *And almost leave their God's commands undone.*] I took the hint of this digression from Vida, softening one of his expressions by the word [*almost.*]

L. 863. *Uriel before had left the orb of day.*] Milton makes Uriel the angel of the Sun ; the name being very proper, signifying the light of God ; which it might be in a sense, and yet that good Father's fancy be very agreeable, who called the Sun, *Umbra Dei*, the shadow of God. I say he had before forsaken it, for an obvious (poetical) reason, because it was eclipsed.

A call to arms through each battalion went,
And millions throng'd the spacious firmament.
The gates unfolding a vast orbit make, 871
And adamantine rocks and pillars shake.
The pomp of battle gather'd deep and wide,
And ranks of angels crowded side by side ;
Cohorts and legions fill'd the plains of light, 875
And march'd in state insufferably bright.
It happen'd then that Michael, standing guard,
Had God's own mount for his peculiar ward,
Where no confusion, noise, complaint, or cry,
Disturbs those joys which roll eternally ;— 880
None, since the angels fell : but when from far
He heard the horrid dissonance of war,
He seiz'd his sword, unsheath'd the shining blade,
Which seem'd by some æthereal artist made ;
Condens'd his form to solid bulk and weight, 885
And in a moment gather'd all his might.

L. 885. *Condens'd his form to solid bulk and weight.*] According to the notion of the Platonists concerning the condensation of the Angelical Vehicle, so as to make it visible : which seems to have been believed by most of the Fathers, who make angels have a sort of bodies ; as indeed they must have whenever they appear, and are sensible not only to our sight, but even to our grosser touch ; as when they laid hold on the hand of Lot. But

Some hoary spoils obtain'd in battles old
 Adorn'd his arms, all horrid to behold.
 His helmet scars and deathless trophies bore
 Of ancient armour which the dragon wore ; 890
 Thus deck'd, among the foremost ranks he flew,
 Who easily their glorious leader knew ;
 As on a cloud, with thunder charg'd, he rode,
 And seem'd in vigour all things but a God. 894

When thus prepar'd, they only wait the word
 To sally forth and aid their injur'd Lord ;
 The cursed city into dust to tear,
 Or scatter worlds through boundless fields of air.
 But Heaven's dread Sovereign did their haste
 prevent,

And with a signal shook the firmament. 900

His word the kindlings of their rage repress'd,
 And peace infus'd into each warlike breast ;
 Then he, in vision, granted them to see
 The great, unknown, tremendous mystery.
 And now they find that 'twas resolv'd on high
 That Christ, the maker of the world, must die ;—

whatever they are, we know, for the comfort of every good man, that they are “all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Heb. i. 14.

That in the Triune council 'twas decreed,
A sinless God for sinful man must bleed ;
His injur'd Father's wrath atone and bear,
And rescue rebel mortals from despair, 910
Complete the number of the heavenly host,
And fill those seats apostate angels lost.

Silence profound all Heaven awhile possess'd,
And awful wonder not to be express'd.
Their arms they drop, their harps again they try ;
New songs are heard, and wonted harmony. 916

Sweet Muse, return, and hover on the wing,
Around thy bleeding, thy anointed King !
Go weep like Magdalene before he died,
And say, like her—" My Love is crucified." 920
Go bathe his wounds, as that repenting fair
Once bath'd his feet, and wip'd them with her hair.
For all the follies of thy youthful days,
Ignobly spent in mortal beauty's praise ;
For robbing Jesus of his just esteem, 925
For all thy broken vows to Heav'n and Him ;
For all thy sloth, thy vanity and pride :
See what they cost, "*thy Love is crucified !*"

On yonder gibbet, as he bow'd his head,
From his pale cheeks the lovely roses fled. 930
His languid lips surviv'd their crimson hue,
And sanguine tears and sweat his limbs bedew ;
Darkness his swimming eyes begins to cloud,
And all his visage was deform'd with blood.
In numerous streams the globules trickled down
Amidst those thorns which his bless'd temples
crown. 936

These to his mangled hands profusely flow,
And join those streams which gush from wounds
below.

These, swelling wide, drench'd all the thirsty ground,
And ting'd its surface for some yards around. 940
Thus have some swains by accident espied,
In some tall mountain's perforated side,
A ragged rock bedew'd with water o'er,
And sweating crystal drops at every pore ;
Each steals into the next ; these faster flow, 945
And lose themselves in larger streams below ;
Their channels pleasure and advantage yield,
And clothe with verdure every neighbouring field.
In rills like these, our Lord his life resign'd,
And with his blood enriches lost mankind. 950

Hail, ye mysterious drops of precious gore !
 Each of you singly worth a world, and more !
 Your wondrous value estimate defies, 953
 Nor can your pregnant sources want supplies.
 Yet should they fail from whence these riches pour,
 This greater wonder would amaze us more—
 What knows no limits must in time decrease,
 Endless must end, and infinite must cease ! 954

The loss of blood, and sweat, his vitals dried,
 When, sick with pains, "I thirst," the Saviour cried ;
 His voice, though faint, was clearly heard beneath
 By those who mock'd him in the pangs of death.
 For acid wine the scoffing soldiers run,
 Which he receives, and tastes, and cries—" 'Tis
 done."
 His spotless soul with death no longer strives, 965
 The God expires, and sinful man revives.

L. 952. *Each of you singly worth a world, and more.*]
 The blood of him who is infinite, the blood of God, as it
 is called in the scripture, Acts xx. 28. (which must be my
 excuse for that bold thought a little lower, *the God ex-*
pires)—"This blood, I say, must have infinite merits, and,
 therefore, extends beyond the value of any finite being.

“ Receive my soul, Almighty God !” he cried ;
Then, cold in death, he bow’d his head, and died.

L. 967. “ *Receive my soul, Almighty God,*” he cried ;
Then, cold in death, he bow’d his head, and died.]

Vida has done this incomparably well, and expressed almost as much in one line as I have done in two ; who thus at the end of his fifth book, *Supremumque animum, ponens caput, exhalavit.*

CONTENTS

OF THE

TENTH BOOK.

AFTER a discourse on the pleasure of seeing Virtue triumphant notwithstanding all misfortunes, and an invocation of the blessed Spirit's assistance for the happy conclusion of the work; Joseph of Arimathea is introduced going to Pilate, and boldly begging the body of our Saviour; which being granted, he repairs to the cross, and takes it thence, after a soldier had pierced the side with a spear, blood and water flowing out of the wound; then bears it to his garden, and lays it in his own sepulchre, accompanied by the blessed Virgin and other friends. The triumphs among the devils at the death of our Saviour: Lucifer's speech on that occasion, ordering all the devils to repair to earth again, and repossess their trances. While he is in the height of his exultation, our Saviour enters hell with a guard of angels; on which all the devils fly at his sight, and sink into the burning lake. The third day, our Lord's soul and body being again united, and he rising from the grave, Mary Magdalene, and other women, go to the sepulchre to embalm him, but find him to be gone, and receive an account of his resurrection from a vision of angels, directing them to go and

acquaint his disciples with the news. Mary Magdalene stays, and sees our Saviour himself, who orders her on the same message; on which Peter and John run to the sepulchre, and find the body to be gone; but, returning, cannot gain belief of the rest till our Saviour himself appears among them, Thomas being then absent, and still incredulous. Soon after, two others, to whom our Lord discovered himself at Emmaus, come in, and relate their history; which Thomas not yet believing, Jesus himself appears, and, shewing him his wounds, fully convinces him—ordering all the disciples to meet him at Tabor in Galilee; who going thither for that end, he first appears to them as they were fishing on the sea of Tiberias, where he tries Peter's faith, and foretels his martyrdom. Thence meeting many of his followers on Mount Tabor, he orders them all to Jerusalem, there to take his last farewell; where being arrived, he takes them out to Bethany; and, after his last discourse and promise to be with them to the end of the world, the heavenly host appear, and sing an anthem, being part of the 24th psalm, while our Saviour is ascending; who, just as he disappears from the disciples, orders two angels back to Mount Olivet, to comfort them with the promise of his return. The disciples thereupon return again with joy to Jerusalem.

THE
L I F E
OF
C H R I S T.

B O O K X.

O HOW refreshing is the glorious sight;
When virtue rises from distress and night!
When all her friends with exultation glow,
And truth and justice rule the world below!
What scenes on earth of sublunary bliss
Can furnish glory more sublime than this;—
To see meek virtue all her foes despise,
See tyrants fall, and pious heroes rise?
Soon, very soon, life's tempests will blow o'er,
And saints with shouts shall reach the happy shore.

O Thou, who from the dark tumultuous wave
Didst raise these worlds, thy servants hear and save!
Through devious life direct our feeble bark, 13
As once thou didst the weary wandering Ark!

Remove these clouds,—let all, serene and fair, 15
Resemble breezes of celestial air!

Let this last voyage no rude storms molest ;
That, of our long-expected port possess'd,
Our souls may anchor in eternal rest. }

True night at length in the disorder'd skies
Prepar'd at her accustom'd hour to rise ; 21
But starts to see her task perform'd before
By deeper shades which spread the ether o'er.
Still high in air two gasping bodies stood,
Expos'd and tortur'd on the cursed wood ; 25
These still surviv'd ; but from our Saviour's breast
His spotless soul had fled to endless rest.
Joseph, courageous, could no longer bear *
To leave in death his mangled relics there ;
But, while far off his weeping friends retir'd, 30
Whose faith and courage with their Lord expir'd,
With Nicodemus, his prudential friend,
Consults ; when both the fatal hill descend ;
For on its top, contiguous to the cross,
These had perceiv'd and mourn'd their common loss.
Hence, with designs congenial to their care, 36
Which no distress could stifle or impair

* John, xix. 38—42.

With speed they hasten'd to great Pilate's ward,
To beg the body of their honor'd Lord ; *
That with due honours they might now inter 40
His last remains in Joseph's sepulchre ;
There, if their just request successful prove,
To pay their tributes of respect and love.
With pious haste they thus to Pilate ran,
To whom, undaunted, Joseph thus began : 45

“ Illustrious Roman, whom our nation's spite
“ First taught to act what would not bear the
light ;

“ As Pontius wishes to be still thought free,
“ And only passive in their cruelty,
“ Wishes through time to bear to distant lands 50
“ His fame and deeds as spotless as his hands,
“ Grant that thy suppliants may receive restor'd
“ The dear remains of their departed Lord.
“ Nor will the priests, renew'd in madness, rave,
“ Or urge their hatred to the silent grave. 55
“ Permit us then to take him from the wood,
“ To cleanse those wounds which lie conceal'd
in blood ;

* Mark, xv. 43.

‘ Due honours pay, at his sad funeral mourn,
“ And sprinkle tears and incense round his urn.”

Pilate, perplex’d, invok’d each pagan power, 60
And call’d on Jove whom heathen realms adore.
“ Thou know’st,” he cried, “ with what extatic joy
“ I’d him restore——how griev’d did him destroy—
“ That life which, sacrific’d to public spite,
“ Gave to the nations an auspicious light. 65
“ Take what remains, since life’s short day is o’er,
“ And take my grief that I can give no more.”

Their wishes granted, they no more desire,
But thank the judge, and instantly retire.
The hill, remounted, less abrupt appear’d ; 70
Nor mobs nor soldiers as they went they fear’d :
Cohorts in arms, and glittering helmets bright,
They saw, diffusing gleams of dazzling light :
At last they at the scene of death arriv’d,
Where new barbarities had been contriv’d ; 75
There, as effects of popular rage, they found
Two mangled bodies bleeding on the ground ;—
Death’s tardy steps had urg’d them to invent
Beyond the cross another punishment.

The bodies, dying, were forbid to stay 80
To stamp dishonour on their Paschal day,
And mar their joys; and hence new arts they try,
And with new torments make them more than die.
With staves the soldiers crush their brittle bones,
And make the mountain echo strokes and groans;
While the poor wretches supplicate in vain 86
For some kind stab to ease their lingering pain.
Jesus before had his meek soul resign'd,
And spar'd their cruelty: his head reclin'd
On his torn shoulder lay: enrag'd, they cried, 90
"The vile impostor has too mildly died."
The brutal guards such disappointment found,
That his dead body they resolve to wound.
A soldier, blind with fury, snatch'd a spear,
(Death arm'd its point, and sat in triumph there,)
And darted at his side, from whence a flood 96
Of limpid water issued, mix'd with blood;*
These were distinct, as through thin crystal shine
The sparkling drops of Gaza's noble vine——
True types of those pure streams which always flow
From God's high throne, to bless the world below——

* John, xix. 34.

Those sacred pledges of our future bliss, 102
Those streams which glad his people's paradise.*

'Midst these transactions Joseph thither came,
And mounts the tree ; for love despises shame :
Himself ascends, and from the fatal wood 106
Takes his dead Lord, surcharg'd with wounds and
blood ;
Then to his garden the sad relics bore,
Where his disciples oft had met before ;
Then near the tomb convey'd the precious load, 110
And dropp'd the mortal remnants of his God.

Immortal Angels, to this garden bring
The glories of your own eternal spring ;
Let ev'ry flower that in fair Eden blooms,
To greet the senses with its rich perfumes, 115
Mix'd with Engeddi's spice and Sharon's rose,
The dying Hero's funeral pomp compose.
And when your sweets are round his body spread,
By Jews dishonour'd both alive and dead, 119
May some kind drops from heav'nly eyes descend,
And prove your fervour for the sinner's Friend,

* 1 John, v. 6—8.

But should you still refuse the aid we crave,
Nor breathe your sorrows round the Saviour's
grave ;

The Virgin mother can that office do 124

With as much love and tenderness as you.

On rugged rocks behold her seated there,
While her companions rend the yielding air
With bitter griefs; the hills repeat their moans,
And in rude concert lengthen out their groans.

She sits in silence; her exhausted eyes 130

Can weep no longer, having no supplies.

For though no pangs announc'd his earliest breath,
She found them more than doubled at his death.

In her cold arms his lifeless body lies,

Death's iron slumber seals his languid eyes; 135

Though these were clos'd, his wounds lay gasping
wide,

Those wounds which rent his feet, his hands, his
side.

L. 132. *For though no pangs announc'd his earliest breath.*] So it was generally conceived and believed by most of the ancients; which is enough to vindicate the propriety of the expression.

She kisses these, while her companions tear,
With loud complaints, their garments and their hair.
This vast excess the men with pain restrain'd, 140
Who could not their own lawless tears command ;
Then to his corpse the last due honours pay,
Which to the vault they tardily convey ;
Then, on approaching night, forsake the tomb,
And move towards their melancholy home. 145

Nature, meanwhile, a general grief express'd,
And all her family in mourning dress'd ;
The whispering gales in mournful sighs complain'd,
As though the fiends had every purpose gain'd.
Nay, heav'n appear'd the common woes to share,
And sorrows murmur'd through celestial air. 151
Hell now alone disclos'd the least delight,
Our woe their joy, our shades their clearest light.
Such general revels then were only known,
When Satan made this new-form'd world his own.
The Pandemonium fills ; the iron gate 156
Is throng'd with many a gloomy potentate ;

L. 156. *The Pandemonium fills ; the iron gate.*] Every one that has read Milton, may remember that it is his word.

Blasphemous Moloch, Satan, Belial, Baal,
And lustful Asmodai : part go, part crawl
In folds of serpents, as when first they fell. 160
They now assume the ugly forms of hell.
High in the midst dire Lucifer ascends
His glowing throne : a frightful guard of fiends
Flock round his standard ; since of those who fell,
The basest spirits guard the prince of hell. 165
He, some faint signs of what he was, retain'd ;
A few weak rays of gloomy light remain'd.
His glimmering form a dusky twilight made
Amid the horror of th' infernal shade.
His power, still mighty, is by Heav'n confin'd, 170
And strong eternal chains the rebel bind.
Were he let loose, and no new thunder hurl'd,
His arm to atoms would reduce the world.
Though chain'd by God, his haughty eyes express
Imperious vice, majestic wickedness ; 175
Great, but not good, as earthly tyrants are,
Who hell's black brand, not Heaven's bright
image wear.

L. 160. *In folds of serpents, as when first they fell.*] See Milton's admirable description of the devils turning into serpents, in his *Paradise Lost*.

Servile, imperious, arrogant, and base,
A wicked joy glares in his dusky face :
Transports of vice a pause from pain impart, 180
And show some latent mischiefs in his heart.
Thus persecutors, his unfeign'd allies,
Who still maintain his war against the skies ;
Hoary in guilt, with blood and murder crown'd,
Their black destroyers anxious wait around, 185
With hellish rage vowing at every breath
To scatter mischief and the darts of death.
Thus hell's proud potentate in flames array'd :
Who having all his dreary world survey'd,
And view'd his strong dominion over man 190
And recent conquest, this harangue began :

“ Angels, dominions, hi'rarchies, and powers,
“ Possessors once of heaven's imperial towers ;
“ Ye bold assailers of the tyrant's throne,
“ Which fate if friendly should have made our
 own ; 195
“ (But though it frown'd, and us with frowns
 pursued,
“ Angelic valour still is unsubdued ;)
“ Full well ye know, nor need we blush to own,
“ The splendid conquests which we since have won.

" That sordid piece of animated clay, 200.
 " Control'd by laws, and destin'd to obey,
 " For whom the beauteous world above was made,
 " A heaven to this uncomfortable shade,
 " We by an easy stratagem betray'd,
 " And all creation in disorder laid. 205
 " Those arts the tyrant's workmanship deface,
 " Which in one moment murder'd Adam's race.
 " Mercy indeed they had, while we had none,
 " Who scorn'd, like man, to kneel and lick his
 throne. 209
 " With nobler views these legions took the field,
 " Who conquer'd worlds, but never learn'd to yield.
 " Unnumber'd myriads bend beneath our sway,
 " Perform our rites, and our commands obey ;
 " Pay ready homage to our nether throne,
 " And Satan's empire and dominion own. 215
 " How small the remnant that his shrines adore !
 " We rally millions, and have millions more ;
 " More priests, more oracles ; nay, even there,
 " In his own land, we have the greatest share.
 " You saw his kings to us for counsel come, 220
 " And Endor spoke when Shilo's voice was dumb.
 " 'Tis true, some dreaming prophecies foretel,
 " In many a mystic type and oracle,

“ This man, this prophet, deity, or all,
“ Whom Abraham’s offspring the Messiah call,
“ With various arts and stratagems I tried, 246
“ With all the baits of vanity and pride,
“ All that the earth, or wealth, or pleasure yields,
“ From Afric’s sands, or Europe’s fertile fields ;
“ Luxurious Asia’s tempting charms were shown,
“ And all the hidden sweets of worlds unknown;
“ Whatever nature made of fair or good,—
“ But all in vain ; impregnable he stood. 253
“ Not so the wretch who friendship’s visor wore,
“ (The Jewish Pontiff was our friend before,)
“ Who from the world self-murder’d hither came,
“ And writhes this moment in yon sea of flame ;
“ He serv’d our purpose ; yet, like those above,
“ We hate the traitor, but the treason love.
“ But now the danger and our fears are o’er ; 260
“ This mighty prince will drive our hosts no more.
“ I saw this king, this prince, expos’d on high ;
“ The cross his throne ; I saw this Saviour die !

L. 250. *Luxurious Asia’s tempting charms were shown.*]

The pleasantness, and riches, and manners of those countries, sufficiently warrant the epithet which I here give the Asiatics.

“ For such his flatterers called him.—Now they
run ;

“ And seek in shades a refuge from the sun ! 265

“ When they elop’d, and he abandon’d them,

“ Revengeful Heaven on our Jerusalem

“ Look’d down with anger ;—let its vengeance
frown,

“ Our Conqueror now may mourn his conquer’d Son.

“ On all the world let Heaven its vengeance take ;

“ Or what is past endeavour to unmake. 271

“ Meanwhile we smile to see its boasted power

“ Too feeble to recal one fleeting hour.

“ Then let its thunder the creation shake,

“ And plunge us deeper in our dreadful lake ; 275

“ Yet here we revel, here suspend our grief,

“ And, though in torment, find some small relief.

“ Envy shall smile, and raise her hydra head,

“ And vice exult, whose greatest foe is dead.

“ Discord, oppression, cruelty, and wrong, 280

“ Which lately fled the magic of his tongue,

“ Shall with due speed their snaky trains prepare,

“ And all triumphant reign in earth and air ;

“ There our exploits and recent conquests tell

“ To every foe, and friend, and oracle ; 285

“ To all the demons that in ether rove,

“ From Delphos’ rock to wise Dodona’s grove.

“ Then these”—But here his speech abruptly ends,

And, all confus’d, he from his throne descends.

For at a distance, through his dismal cell, 290

He saw strange light which half illumin’d hell.

The gates wide bursting, Death in league with Sin

Shriek’d, and disturb’d the Sanhedrim within.

The Conqueror follow’d, who the blow had given,

And stood the glorious Potentate of Heaven : 295

Jesus the God ;—a guard of Angels stands,

And reddening thunders mutter’d in their hands.

His voice and looks the rebel fiends surprise,

While fiercer lightning darted from his eyes.

Too well his eyes, too well his arm, they knew ;

For all had seen and felt their vigour too. 301

First did their trembling king the firm forsake,

And headlong plung’d into the flaming lake.

With equal speed unnumber’d legions run,

And seek new hells, the Lamb’s fierce wrath to

shun ;

305

These fall at once, and, from the dreadful steep,

Enter the bosom of the boundless deep ;

In liquid flame extensive circles make,
And raise strange billows in the brimstone lake.
Thus, from the margin of the silver Po, 310
When watchful mallards spy their deadly foe,—
Perceive the eagle darting through the air,—
They mount their pinions, and retreat with fear ;
And when they find him gaining on their rear,
Strike headlong through the stream, and disappear.

The fiends on earth perceive the fatal blow,
And strangely sympathize with those below ;
And as of old from Heaven's high wall they fell,
So each with haste forsakes his oracle.
These, as autumnal leaves the valley spread 320
Ere shivering winter lifts his palsied head,
With lamentations urge their rapid flight,
And seek for refuge in the realms of night:
Thus does the woman's conquering offspring tread
In more than triumph on the serpent's head! 325

L. 325. *In more than triumph on the serpent's head.*]
I confess that my own private judgment militates against what is here advanced concerning our Lord's descent into the infernal regions. But as many of the ancient fathers of the church were established in this sentiment, I have introduced it into the poem ; and the candid reader is left to judge for himself.

With him, sweet Muse, to earth again return,
Where his sad death his friends, mistaken, mourn :
They mourn him dead, who greatly liv'd before, |
Who died for man, but lives to die no more.
His glorious body, active and refin'd, 330
Now moves in concert with his purest mind ;
Alert and agile it in order stands,
And swift as thought obeys the soul's commands.
Like that it moves, and in a moment flies
From east to west, from earth to paradise. 335
His friends, alas ! who yet lamenting were
In stupid sorrow and supine despair,
Forgot the promise of his sure return,
And without hope or consolation mourn.
Sad were the hours ; no comfortable ray 340
They wore, and night increas'd the gloom of day.
With kinder omens the third morn appears,
The happy morning sent to dry their tears.
Thou solar star, thou radiant orb of day,
Propel thy light, and scourge this dull delay !
Another Sun dispels another night, 346
And glads the world with intellectual light ;
And when his radiance reaches every shore,
The happy world will need thy rays no more.

Before the sun fair Magdalene arose, 350
Who to the tomb with aromatics goes;
Resolv'd to rescue from the putrid grave,
And fill with unguents, him she meant to save.
The same kind office also thither drew
Her female friends who her intention knew ; 355
These met together : though their fears were
strong,
Their love was stronger, and they walk'd along.
At length with various painful doubts they come,
And reach the garden which contain'd the tomb.
On their approach, an unexpected fear 360
Started at once, and much perplex'd them here.
They recollected that a ponderous stone,
Beneath whose weight five times their strength
would groan,
Had been procur'd, and, plac'd before the cave,
Secur'd the passage to their Saviour's grave ; 365
And ere they reach'd it, each presum'd to say—
“ What powerful hand shall roll the rock away ?”
The doubtful Jews, when Jesus was interr'd,
To mar predictions they had often heard,
Their recent actions from reproach to save, 370
And blast his credit in the silent grave,

(For guilt suspects) had plac'd a Roman guard
Around the sepulchre: with labour hard
They brought that ponderous stone which Christ
immur'd,

And by a seal their whole design secur'd. 375

By this they aim'd to ratify his doom,

And thus forbid him to escape the tomb.

For Christ had said, "The third auspicious day,

"Life shall revive this uncorrupted clay." 379

They knew his word had others rais'd; nor yet

Could they the power which Lazarus felt, forget,

Or Nain's youth; nor were their fears in vain,

Nor longer Hades could his soul contain. 383

A conqueror thence he rose where late he fell,

And dragg'd in chains of triumph death and hell.

That hour arriv'd when nature must obey 386

Her sovereign Lord, he will'd the stone away.

L. 387. *Her sovereign Lord, he will'd the stone away.*] These are the words of Mr. S. Wesley. But I see no difficulty in supposing or believing that our Lord rose with his immortal spiritual body, (see 1 Cor. xv. 44, 53, 54.) without condescending to remove either the stone or the earth. He undoubtedly appeared suddenly to his disciples more than once in the upper room, when the doors were shut

Though round his tomb officious angels stay'd,
Their rising Master wanted not their aid.
In silent Majesty his form ascends, 390
And in his triumphs the great contest ends.
The rising God let saints and angels sing,
Who tread the earth, or hover on the wing;
Who now in time pursue the heavenly road,
Or bask in bliss before the throne of God ! 395
Thus does the sun his beaming glories bring ;
Thus from dead winter mounts the cheerful spring.
Jesus is ris'n, who does the world restore :
Awake, ye dead ; ye sinners, sleep no more.
Awake, ye careless, from enchantments deep, 400
And sleep no more, or else for ever sleep !

The Saviour risen, his unrivall'd care
Station'd two bright attendant angels there,

for fear of the Jews (John xx.), and vanished in a moment from their sight. The uncouth notion of some—that our Lord opened and shut the door, while the disciples were not aware of it, appears to me to convey a very low and mean idea. Mr. S. Wesley's opinion, however, requires, that our Lord should not only will the stone away, but should also will it back again.

Whose early pious pilgrims to console
Who with mistaken tears his loss condole. 405
Their trembling feet no sooner had they set *
Within the garden, than strange scenes they met.
The earth convuls'd was trembling where he lay,
And frighted nature felt more pangs than they;
The yielding air some unknown powers divide,
And flitting forms seem'd brushing by their side.
On their approach the guards celestial stand,
And with due honours range on either hand;
As on the sight of earthly majesty
A lane is made till all the pomp goes by. 415
The heavenly youth before these women went,
Whose lovely presence heighten'd the event;
From the cave's mouth he rolls the mighty stone,
From whence before our conquering Lord was
gone;
He rolls it, and triumphant sits thereon. 420
The Roman soldiers, foreigners to fear, †
Sustain'd their stations till his form drew near;
Then made some effort to resist, and fain
To draw their swords they strove, but strove in vain;

* Matt. xxviii. 1, &c.

† Matt. xxviii. 4,

Their foe was heavenly, and in vain they rear 425
 Their useless piles, suspended, in the air.
 Fear seiz'd their souls, their hands disarm'd they
 found,
 And all their armour clanks against the ground ;
 Their bodies trembled, and their courage fled,
 And in some moments all appear'd as dead. 430

The lovely Seraph with a calmer air *
 Turn'd to the women to dispel their fear ; †
 Laid by his frowns, in mildest accents spoke,
 And in these words the morning silence broke : ‡
 “ Why should you fear, since Heaven, with all its
 powers, 435
 “ Guards whom you seek—your suffering Lord,
 and ours ?
 “ Why should you pierce this melancholy shade,
 “ Or idly seek the living with the dead ?

L. 426. *Their useless piles, suspended, in the air.*] Piles were a sort of heavy darts, or javelins, used by the Romans.

L. 428. *And all their armour clanks against the ground.*] I think it is Cowley's verse, in the fall of Nahash, when kill'd by Jonathan.

* Matt. xxviii. 5—7.

† Mar. xvi. 5—7.

‡ Luke xxiv. 5—7.

- “Dismiss your griefs, nor let these tears deplore
“Your Saviour God, who lives to die no more.
“Did not he promise the third day to rise? 441
“Could Christ deceive? Advance, and trust your
 eyes!
“See the cold cavern where he lay—see there
“The linen clothes and empty sepulchre.
“Convinc’d by these, with expedition go, 443
“And to your friends the happy tidings show.”

With joy and trembling the fair group retire,
Anxious to know, yet fearful to inquire.
Courageous Magdalene resolv’d to stay,
While to their friends the others haste away. 450
She, all intent her much-lov’d Lord to find,
Wanted his presence to console her mind—
Her mind, which struggling thoughts like earth-
 quakes move,
Tortur’d at once with hope, and doubt, and love.
Angelic witness she could scarce receive; 455
The tidings seem’d too glorious to believe.
With eyes half-clos’d, or fix’d upon the ground,
With thoughts absorb’d in subjects most profound,

She heard some sound, and saw a form appear,
Which she imagin'd was the gardener near. 460
She, as he came, suppress'd the rising sigh,
And wip'd the tear that started from her eye,
Then thus began—"If thou hast carried hence
"The poor remains of murder'd innocence, *
"Tell me in pity where his limbs are laid, 465
"For my last sighs and tears are yet unpaid.
"There I"—The Saviour could no longer bear,
But in her pangs sustain'd an equal share :
Around his temples beam'd some sacred rays,
And in his face she saw the Godhead blaze. 470
Her honour'd Lord she recognis'd and knew,
And at his feet herself in transports threw ;
And, feeling joys too vast to be express'd,
"Master," she cried, and spoke in looks the rest.
Her Lord salutes her with his radiant eyes, 475
And adds in words—"Suspend thy ecstasies.
"Go, tell my brethren, that I hold them dear,
"Though partly sunk in unbelief and fear :"
And having charg'd her this request to bear, 479
Glides from her sight in fields of trackless air.

* John, x. 15.

When she arriv'd and told what she had seen,
All were incredulous as she had been ;
They thought the vision by her fancy made,
Or conjur'd up by some delusive shade.
Yet quite alarm'd with such uncommon news, 485
They half acknowledge what they half refuse ;
And in this strait resolv'd to ascertain
A fact which none were able to explain.
John, while the others much attention lend,
Seem'd most concern'd, as Christ was most his
friend. 490
Cephas stood next, who, rising from the fall,
In faith and courage seem'd a spur to all :
Thus broken bones, by skilful artists dress'd,
And set again, grow stronger than the rest. 494
Warm zeal and friendship those disciples bear
In a few moments to the sepulchre.
On entering here, they could no body find,
But saw the linen which was left behind,*
The spice with which the Jews embalm their dead,
And blood-stain'd napkin taken from his head; 500
Which in close folds was in a corner plac'd :
A work confessing neither fear nor haste.

* John, xx. 5—7.

On seeing these they could no longer mourn,
But both in triumph to the rest return.]
They come with speed, but gain'd no credit here :
For all were fill'd with terror and despair. 506
A cloud of grief brought on a mental night,
Which left the whole without one gleam of light.
Their sun seem'd set, which they in groans deplore,
Yea, set in death's dark shades to rise no more.
The doors were shut, lest the malicious Jews 511
Should the apostles, as their Lord, accuse
Of crimes unknown : hence all in silence were ;
And sighs suppress'd but gently mov'd the air :
Their only light, one taper's glimmering ray, 515
And this was hidden, lest it should betray.
Amidst this gloom, an unexpected sight
Appear'd before them in a flood of light ;
The form was human, but the air and dress,
And bright celestial light, the God confess. 520

L. 510. *Yea, set in death's dark shades to rise no more.*] So, it seems, they all thought : for it was a long time before they believed in the resurrection, though they had repeated and credible testimonies of it from eye-witnesses ; much less can we suppose they did so, when it depended on faith only.

He look'd divinely, did divinely move ; 521
His voice was heav'nly, breathing peace and love.
His wond'rous words, which light and life convey'd,
Resembling those by which the world was made ;
Reviving vigour through their spirits sent, 525
And struck new gladness wheresoe'er they went. *
He mildly chides their unbelief and fear,
And shows those wounds made by the nails and
spear ;
And, their conviction fully to comple'e,
Of their provisions condescends to eat. * 530
Christ, having banish'd thus their doubts and fears,
Breathes peace into their souls, and disappears.

Thomas, it seems, through accident or fear,
Was at a distance when his Lord was there ;
And miss'd those proofs which Jesus deign'd to
give, 535
That all his friends by seeing might believe ;
But now, returning to rejoin the rest,
Heard all the pleasures of their souls express'd ;
Heard them the words and acts of Christ explain,
His wounds describe ; but heard the whole in vain.

* Luke xxiv. 43.

Cephas with zeal proceeded to declare 541

The wond'rous facts which all attested there.

“Dismiss thy doubts,” he cries; “he did appear;

“These eyes beheld our common Saviour here;

“To all assembled, if my sense be true, 545

“He spoke as clearly as I speak to you.

“All present saw and heard.”—“You must forgive,”

Continued Thomas, “if I disbelieve.

“It seems a doubtful”—While he thus replies,

In rushes Cleopas with new surprise; 550

Haste seal'd his lips, his eyes his heart betray'd,

And indicated what he quickly said:

His nimble feet his breath and voice outran;

He paus'd, recover'd both, and thus began:

“The Saviour lives: on this auspicious day, 555

“With this companion journeying on our way,

“The Lord appear'd;—Thou canst the same
attest!”

He said, and turn'd, appealing to his breast.

His friend, thus bidden, hasten'd to declare

A plain relation of the whole affair: 560

“As toss'd 'twixt lessening hope and growing fear,*

“And wearied out with scenes of sorrow here,

* Luke xxiv. 13—35.

- “ Which but reviv’d our losses, we forsook
“ This guilty city, and a journey took
“ Up to Emmaus, which is known to all, 565
“ Seated beneath an easy mountain’s fall.
“ When we drew nearer to the place design’d,
“ Scarce half our little journey now behind ;
“ Just at Ba’al-Perazin we could descry
“ The little house of aged Zachary, 570
“ The Baptist’s happy sire : When this was seen,
“ Reflection brought a train of sorrow in.
“ The attestation this great prophet gave
“ To our great Lord by Jordan’s sacred wave,
“ The fate of each upon our minds impress’d :—
“ You knew their virtues, and you know the rest,
“ Both just and good, and innocent in vain, 577
“ By Herod that, and this by Pilate slain.
“ With various talk beguiling the ascent,
“ Sometimes with tears ; as up the hill we went,
“ An unknown stranger join’d us, whom we
“ guess’d 581
“ To be some convert coming from the feast.
“ On his approach we strove to dry our eyes,
“ But faster still new stubborn streams arise.

“ The stranger saw, and said—“ It may be rude
“ In one like me by speaking to intrude 586
“ Upon your private thoughts ; yet I perceive
“ Such proofs of anguish as can not deceive.
“ May I presume, amid this tide of woes,
“ To know the cause from whence your sorrow
 flows ; 590
“ Since by partaking we divide and share
“ The common sufferings which the whole must
 bear ?”

“ Struck with his courtesy, my friend replies,
“ While gusts of sorrow stream from both our eyes,
“ Art thou alone a stranger in this place, 595
“ And hast not known what things are come to
 pass ?
“ What things ? he said. We answer’d, Can it be,—
“ Hast thou not heard of Jewish cruelty ?
“ How Christ, a prophet both in deed and word,
“ Whose life was wholly given to the Lord, 600
“ Has, by our rulers, been condemn’d to death,
“ And on the fatal cross depriv’d of breath.
“ By Christ such signs were to the people shown,
“ That in no corner is his name unknown

“ Throughout the country. Such great deeds
before 605

“ No man perform’d, and hence we thought him
more,

“ Thought him the wond’rous promis’d Prince
foretold

“ In all the holy oracles of old—

“ The great Messiah,—the bestow’d of God

“ To bruise the nations with an iron rod. 610

“ We trusted he, whose death we now deplore,

“ Would have redeem’d us from oppressive power.

“ But, if deceiv’d, Israel will never find

“ A prince more just, to nobler deeds inclin’d,

“ More mild, and merciful, and kind, and good,

“ With half his virtues and his grace endued. 616

“ But ah ! by our deceiving hopes misled,

“ We saw his exit, and lament him dead.

“ Some faint traditions, while he was alive, 619

“ Spoke of his death, but said he would revive :

“ Hence hope, fond hope, exerting all her power,

“ Hangs o’er his tomb, and waits the destin’d hour;

“ But fear intruding, with her haggard train,

“ Wars with our views, and darkens all the scene.

“ Besides all this, to consummate our grief, 625

“ And murder every prospect of relief,

“ This is the day to which our hopes were led,
“ But still we fear he lies among the dead.
“ ’Tis true, some women early in the morn 629
“ Went to the cave that had been made his urn ;
“ They found him not ; but felt their hopes
 revive,
“ Because some angels said he was alive.
“ Some others went, but found, what we deplore,
“ The body gone, but heard of nothing more.
“ Judge then our case.” The stranger seem’d to
 hear, 635
And spoke with mildness that appear’d severe :

“ Mistaken men, you seem immers’d in night,
“ And sadly wander void of heavenly light.
“ Look on the prophecies for ages since,
“ Was not Messiah call’d a suffering Prince? 640
“ His birth, his life, his death, the prophets tell,
“ In many a mystic type and oracle.
“ Did not the Father previously ordain
“ His Son to suffer first, and then to reign ?

L. 637. *Mistaken men, you seem immers’d in night.*
O fools, and slow of heart, &c. our Saviour calls them.

- “ Why else from faithful Abraham’s bosom, why
 “ Was his beloved Isaac drawn to die ? 646 }
 “ Why was he offer’d, too, near Calvary ?
 “ What meant the Paschal Lamb, and wherefore
 dies
 “ The sinless herd, a deadly sacrifice ?
 “ For what did Moses in the wilds prepare * 650
 “ A brazen serpent, lifting it in air ?

L. 647. *Why was he offer’d, too, near Calvary ?*] Old tradition says, that Adam’s skull or head was found about this mountain, whence some derive its name Golgotha. A little more probable it is, that it derives its name from its shape, being a round bare rock, at a distance appearing like a skull ; or, at least, from the many unburied skulls and bones there found, this being the place of public execution. Now it is certain, that Isaac was offered near, or on Calvary, for that itself is one of the mountains in the land of Moriah ; and it was upon one of these that he was offered : and, perhaps, our Saviour was promised of old, to come, or appear, in that very place. For, whereas we render the Jehovah Jireh, in Gen. xxii. 14. “ In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen ; ” it will bear another sense ; “ In the mount shall the Lord be seen ” — this mount, either Mount Moriah, on which part of the city and temple was built, (Vid. Joseph.) and where our Lord, the true Jehovah, so frequently appeared ; or on Mount Calvary itself, where this great antitype of Isaac was offered. See Coke’s Commentary on Gen. xxii.

* Num. xxi. 8.

“ You know the ease each wounded Jew receiv’d,
 “ Who turn’d his half-clos’d eyes—he look’d, and
 liv’d.

“ The time would fail to trace the shadows o’er,
 “ The wounds which David typically bore,— *
 “ Unfold predictions in the Psalms and Law,
 “ Or note those visions which Isaiah saw: †
 “ You know *that* prophet speaks distinct and clear,
 “ Scarce prophecies, but histories, you hear
 “ When he is read : Now Jesse’s noble stem, 660
 “ And now the Prince, assumes his diadem.
 “ His purple robes decypher but too plain,
 “ Not Tyrian dies, but dies of nobler grain—
 “ His sinless blood, abus’d, condemn’d, betray’d,
 “ And for mankind a needful victim made : 665
 “ In red apparel see the Hero come
 “ From Bozra’s rock, a bleeding conqu’ror home. ‡
 “ Then should not Christ, as all these types
 pourtray,
 “ First suffer death, then rise to glorious day ?”

“ While thus the stranger spoke, we ceas’d to
 mourn, 670
 “ And with strange raptures felt our bosoms burn ;

* Ps. xxii. 16.

† Isa. liii.

‡ Isa. lxiii. 1.

“ Without emotion saw the day descend,
“ And, ere we wish’d it, reach’d our journey’s end.
“ We paus’d in silence as he took his leave,
“ And strongly felt inducements to believe ; 675
“ And, quite unconscious of design or art,
“ Heard his farewell, but yet were loath to part.
“ Impress’d with friendship, to induce his stay,
“ We urg’d and argued the decline of day ;
“ Begg’d him to tarry at our country-seat, 680
“ Lodge as we lodg’d, and eat as we should eat.
“ He mildly grants : we enter’d, and refresh’d
“ Our weary limbs with grateful food and rest.
“ The simple fare our village could afford
“ Directly spread the hospitable board : 685
“ The stranger then both bless’d and broke the
bread ;
“ When in an instant the disguises fled ;
“ The lambent glories round his temples shone,
“ And in a moment all our doubts were gone.
“ Before our long-lost, dear lamented Lord, 690
“ Low at his feet we trembled and ador’d ;
“ Express’d our bliss, our gratitude, and love ;
“ And prayer and praises carried us above.

“ While prostrate thus, our Lord had scarcely
heard 694
“ Our bursting raptures, when he disappear’d.
“ We all, astonish’d, gaz’d upon the light,
“ But Christ himself had vanish’d from our sight ;
“ And in that hour in which the Saviour went,
“ We left the place to tell you the event.” 699

Thus happy souls, who seek by faith and prayer
Christ in the means, are sure to find him there :
Let prodigals and swine on husks be fed,
Jesus will still be known in breaking bread.

But these two friends in vain their wonders tell,
Thomas at least remains an infidel ; 705
Argues, and questions, why he never stay’d,
But always vanish’d like a fleeting shade ;
Declares that nothing shall remove his fear,
But demonstrations evident and clear. 709
“ Unless,” said he, “ these eyes behold my Lord,
“ And from his lips these ears receive his word ;—
“ Unless I see those wounds of which he died,
“ And with these fingers feel his hands and side,
“ I still shall think that all the proofs you give
“ Are mere delusion ; and will not believe.” 715

Thus having said, they with amaze behold
The room all delug'd with ethereal gold;
Clear waves of glory gild th' illumin'd air;
And while they gaz'd, they saw their Saviour
there.

From all his wounds refulgent radiance flow'd,
Strong and profuse as when they yielded blood,
All knelt, adoring; Thomas only stands, 722
To whom the Saviour stretch'd his wounded
hands, *

And show'd the nails' impressions, which abide
In glorious scars: Then turn'd his mangled side,
And said—"the utmost evidence receive, 726
"And be no longer faithless, but believe."
Prone on the earth he hastens to adore,
And cries, "my Lord, my God!" and says no
more.

The prostrate saint the Saviour gently rais'd, 730
And in soft words thus chid him while he prais'd.
"Thou from thy senses dost the truth receive;
"But *those* are bless'd, who without sight believe."
Thus having said, he bade them all repair
With speed to Galilee, and meet him there 735

* John, xx. 27.

On Tabor's holy mount, where once their Lord
Had been before by heav'nly hosts ador'd ;
Then pledg'd his word, and promis'd to appear,
Impart advice, and show new wonders there ; 739
Describe the world in which his friends must dwell,
Confirm their faith, and take his last farewell.

In peace and joy they from the feast return,
To meet their Lord, whom they no longer mourn ;
Nor idly wait to be by wonders fed,—
With honest toil they earn their daily bread. 745

L. 745. *With honest toil they earn their daily bread.*] The apostles were not yet sent abroad to convert the world, as they were after the descent of the Holy Ghost, and so kept to their old employments ; but when they left those, to undertake more eminently the cure of souls, heavy enough of itself without any additional weight, then we do not find St. Peter a fishing any more, unless, as our Saviour said, to catch men : and St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that the Lord himself had ordained, that those who preached the gospel, should live by the gospel. St. Paul indeed, in some peculiar circumstances, was an exception. But here I would by no means be thought to speak against the use of any talents which God has given us. I consider the local ministers and preachers in our United Kingdom as men of great, and, under God, of essential importance to the progress of the work of salvation. I would only intimate, that those who are blessed with gifts and talents, sufficient for the full ministry of the word, should entirely devote themselves to that sacred duty.

It happen'd, on a dark but silent night,
That Peter his companions did invite
The heedless fish in flaxen toils to take,
Near to Tiberias, on the neighbouring lake.
And, as his friends to join him gave consent, 750
All, near the city, on the water went.
The barren waves withheld their usual spoils,
And fruitless labour closed all their toils. *
But when the morn their vain pursuits expos'd,
Its opening light upon the shore disclos'd 755
A man of stature, gesture, face, and dress,
Unknown,—who hails, and asks them what success
The night had brought? “Extremely bad,” they
said;
For all their prospects of success had fled. 759
He then inquir'd which side their net had lain?
Where they had labour'd with such fruitless pain?
Then ask'd again, what methods they had tried?
And bade them drop it on the other side,
Adding,—“with certainty a shoal remains 764
“To meet your views, and recompense your pains.”
His kind advice the men adopting, caught,
As once before, a most amazing draught.

* John, ~~xxi~~. 3.

Their utmost strength united wanted more ;
To lift their net, or drag their prey on shore,
But by their boat their finny prize they tow'd, 770
Which seem'd oppress'd, while fasten'd to the load.
When near the land, the lov'd disciple cries,
" Christ stands on shore,"—so sharp are friend-
ship's eyes,

" Behold the Lord !" the signal Peter takes,
And on the surges swims along the lake, 775
And, when arriv'd upon the oozy shores,
Devoid of guile, his well-known Lord adores.
His ten companions were not far behind,
Who, when they come, a ready banquet find,
By some officious guardian angel laid, 780
To show their Master wanted not their aid ;
Then on the sounding beach partook the feast,
Enjoy'd the favour, and the Giver bless'd.
But when their wond'rous banquet now was o'er,
Refresh'd by that, but by their Master more, 785
They gaz'd, yet fear'd their senses might deceive,
While joy allow'd them scarcely to believe.
Cephas grown bold, who had so oft denied
That Lord for whom he would have oft'ner died,

Whose honest zeal so far his faith outran, 790
Urg'd Christ to speak, and thus the God began :

“ Thou, whose warm zeal could death's worst
shape outbrave,

“ And without sinking tread the slippery wave, 795

“ Say, as thou wouldst thy heart to Heav'n
approve,

“ If more than these thou dost thy Master love ?” *

Peter, with caution, yet with zeal, replied, 800
And on the question bade his Lord decide :

“ I dare not, who so little love have shown,

“ Or question theirs, or recommend my own ;

“ But how I love, let Christ the witness be, 805

“ For Lord thou know'st, and I appeal to thee.”

“ Then feed my lambs,” the Saviour straight
replied,

“ In pastures green by some still waters' side.”

The self-same question was repeated o'er,

And drew the answer it obtain'd before. 810

Peter, still urg'd, must a third time be tried,

Who thrice affirms, for he had thrice denied ;

* John, xxi. 15.

But keenly tortur'd with ingenuous pain,

Thus made with warmth the same reply again :

“ O why, my Lord, whose thoughts all secrets know,

“ A task so hard must Peter undergo ? 811

“ How much I love, let me no witness be ;

“ For Lord thou know'st, and I appeal to thee.”

“ Then feed my lambs,” our Saviour straight
replied,

“ In pastures green by some still waters' side. 815

“ Now, while thou may'st, defend the sacred fold;

“ For time rolls on, and thou art growing old.

“ Some lustres since, thy nerves were firm and strong,

“ And Peter walk'd all vigorous and young ; 819

“ Thy nimble hands could then thy members bind,

“ And men almost as soon might track the wind ;

“ But when old age with palsied steps draws near,

“ And warns thee, thou must stay no longer here,

“ Then the rude soldiers shall, with churlish bands,

“ Seize thy weak arms, and tie thy trembling hands ;

“ My double convert to his death consign, 826

“ Which struggling nature shall in vain decline.

“ I warn thee well, nor unprovided be ;

“ But when I call, prepare to follow me.”

He said, nor longer on the shore would stay,
But to fair Tabor's mountain leads the way ; 831
There to a numerous troop of friends appears,
Confirms their faith and dissipates their fears ;
In his bless'd law instructs each wavering mind,
And warns them all of dangers yet behind ; 835
Of aid assures them to withstand their foes,
Though He departs and to his Father goes ;
Calms all their fears, directs them not to grieve
When at the last he takes his final leave ;
And having thus prepar'd them for their lot, 840
Kindly salutes them, and forsakes the spot.

With peace dismiss'd, their steps they backward
bend,
And at fair Solyma their Lord attend ;
For his approach their pious minds prepare
With ardent wishes, holy hymns, and prayer. 845
While this bless'd work the infant church employs,
He comes, and with him all his train of joys ;

L. 831. *But to fair Tabor's mountain leads the way.*] Vjd. St. Matt. xxviii. 16. where it is said, "the apostles went to a mountain where Jesus had appointed them ;" and this probably was either Tabor, or that of the Beatitudes, because it was somewhere in Galilee, and near the lake.

Then with his little flock of happy friends
 Forsakes the city, and the hill ascends
 Of lovely Bethany ; for ever leaves 850
 Thee, sweet Gethsemane ; from both receives
 Some new supplies to fill his humble train,
 Till from the top they saw the distant plain,
 O'er whose smooth bosom murmuring Kidron ran;
 When thus the Saviour of the world began : 855

“ My Father calls, and I must shortly go.
 “ Farewell, ye dear companions of my woe ;
 “ As Heav’n must Christ till the great day receive,
 “ Peace is the last rich legacy I leave : 859
 “ Be that the mark of mine ; by that rich boon
 “ My little flock shall from the world be known.
 “ Harmless as doves, but wise as serpents made,
 “ I send you forth the truths I preach to spread ;
 “ I send you forth, as me the Father sent, 864
 “ To warn mankind, and bid the world repent.
 “ All power in heaven and earth his word secures
 “ To his lov’d Son ; who now confirms it yours ;

867. *To his lov’d Son ; who now confirms it yours.*] So says our Saviour ; “ all power is given to me in heaven and in earth : ” and again, “ as the Father hath sent me, so send I you : ”—Not the same power in degree, but the same sort of spiritual power, that of binding and loosing ; “ what-

- “ To censure those who his soft yoke refuse, 868
 “ And both in earth and heaven to bind and loose. *
 “ Go then ; and when to distant nations hurl’d,
 “ Preach in my name, and proselyte the world— †
 “ In mine and God’s, for God and Christ are one,
 “ And that bless’d Spirit, from him and from the Son
 “ Eternally proceeding :—boldly go, 874
 “ As far as land is stretch’d, or waters flow ;—
 “ Till eastern realms your Lord their Saviour style,
 “ Till gospel light illumines Albion’s Isle ;—
 “ Till in the west new kingdoms yet conceal’d,
 “ In time’s revolving race to be reveal’d ;— 879

soever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven,”
 &c. That is, God himself will ratify those censures and ab-
 solutions which they should rightfully dispense ; this power
 not being given so much as to the seventy, much less to
 all christians, but to the eleven only. St. Matt. xxviii.
 18. The eleven disciples went away into Galilee ; and
 Jesus spake unto them, saying, “ all power is given unto
 me,” &c.

* Matt. xvi. 19. † Mark xvi. 15.

L. 871. *Preach in my name, and proselyte the world.*] I
 think the word proselyte comes nearer the *μαθητεύσατε*
 in the original, than that by which we translate it. Now
 the custom of making proselytes among the Jews, all
 know, was, to admit whole families together ; not make
 the father an Israelite, and leave the child a Heathen.

" Till empires, kingdoms, continents, and isles,
 " Shall hear my gospel, and partake its smiles.
 " Those who receive your words, and mine obey,
 " Shall in my blood wash all their sins away.
 " Those happy souls who thus for heaven prepare,
 " Shall, when I come, with triumph enter there ;
 " While such as basely scorn their day of grace,
 " A reprobate incorrigible race, 887
 " Who mock my sufferings and insult my pain,
 " And makeme groan and shed my blood in vain,—
 " These,when the globe expires in flames, must go,
 " From choosing vice, to endless worlds of woe.

" Nor will I you without credentials send ;
 " Angels shall guard you, miracles attend 893
 " Your powerful words—these shall so far prevail,
 " That vengeance hastens where your missions fail.
 " The guilty nations smitten, with surprise, 896
 " Must own your power, or disbelieve their eyes ;
 " For when the blessed Paraclete shall fall,
 " And with his power inspire both great and small,

L. 898. *For when the blessed Paraclete shall fall.*] The sense of the word παράκλητ[Ⓞ] is disputed among the learned. Some think it means an advocate, others a counsellor, &c. and it may very well mean both.

“ (Nor if at fam’d Jerusalem you stay, 900
“ And wait his coming, will he long delay,)

However, whatever is intended by it, the word that I use will reach it.

Dr. Doddridge, in his *Family Expositor*, vol. ii. p. 390, after paraphrasing Matt. xxiv. 14. observes in a note on these words, (“ The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all nations : ”) as follows : “ The accomplishment of this extraordinary prophesy is admirably illustrated by Dr. Arthur Young, vol. ii. p. 216—234. It appears from the most credible records, that the gospel was preached in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by Jude : in Egypt, Marmorica, Mauritania, and other parts of Africa, by Mark, Simon, and Jude : in Ethiopia by Candace’s Eunuch and Matthias : in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighbouring parts of Asia, by Peter : in the territories of the seven Asiatic churches, by John : in Parthia, by Matthew : in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew : in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew : in Persia, by Simon and Jude : in Media, Carmania, and several eastern parts, by Thomas : and through that vast tract of territory from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, by Paul ; as also in Italy, and probably in Spain, Gaul, and Britain. In most of these places success attended the preaching of the gospel, and christian churches were planted in less than thirty years after this prophesy was delivered, which was some time before the destruction of Jerusalem took place.” It is thus, in one view, that we behold a train of events corresponding with the prediction, and the truths of the gospel disseminated over so large a portion of the globe. The promise, however, belongs in an *evangelical sense* to all the ministers of the gospel in all the ages of the world, and reaches to the end of time.

“ The world shall wonder at the signs you do,

“ And you, amaz’d, shall gaze with wonder too.

“ All tongues, and more than were at Babel
known, *

“ Shall then be yours, familiar as your own : 905

“ Your piercing thoughts shall many hearts reveal,

“ And those diseas’d shall feel your shadows heal ; †

“ The fiends on earth shall envy fiends in hell,

“ And at your word flee from their oracle. 909

“ Nor shall your conquests be to them confin’d ;

“ Those ills shall cease with which they plague
mankind ;

“ Your words shall blast the mischiefs they employ,

“ Nor more shall nature nature’s self destroy.

“ Blue poisons harmless through your veins shall
flow, ‡

“ And asps and vipers inoffensive grow : || 915

“ Their teeth and stings no venom shall retain ;

“ Serpents disarm’d shall idly brush the plain.

“ Nor of your safety let your souls despair ;

“ I, though unseen, shall still be everywhere,

* Acts, ii. 4—11.

† Acts, v. 15.

‡ Mark, xvi. 18.

|| Acts, xxviii. 3—5.

“ To watch your foes, protect you and defend, 920
“ Till this frail world in flames and ashes end ;
“ Till each reviving dust forsakes its urn,
“ And in the clouds you see your Lord return.”

While thus he spoke, a trembling purple light
Began to gild the lofty mountain's height. 925
As down its breast the moving glory spread,
Each lofty cedar bent its leafy head ;
Each humble palm below appear'd to fear,
And all confess'd some great event was near.
Soft music whisper'd from a distant cloud, 930
And seem'd descending more distinct and loud ;
Till by degrees, as it appear'd more nigh,
The tramp of conquest sounded through the sky ;
Celestial harps the pleasing notes prolong,
And form in concert a triumphal song. 935
Alternatively thus they sung and play'd,
The words a King, the tune an Angel made :

PSALM XXIV. 7—10.

THE ANGELS BELOW.

Prepare ! prepare, ye glitt'ring orbs above !
At decent distance roll away !
Let only purest ether stay ! 940
Let envious clouds remove !

All ye bright clouds, his way prepare !
Sweep with your purple wings the air !
The King of Glory enters there !

THE ANGELS ABOVE.

Say you, for surely you must know, 945
Say you who keep perpetual guard below,
What God, what Hero do you bring ;
What wond'rous king?

THE ANGELS BELOW.

'Tis he who lately triumph'd o'er the grave,
Who drags the king of pride along ; 950
With ease the stronger binds the strong,
And hideous death his slave !
Whom all the heav'nly warriors sing,
Their trophies to his footstool bring ;
The conquering God, the wond'rous King! 955

While thus they sing, the Saviour mounts alone,
Nor needs their power to fortify his own :
All impious doubts for ever to prevent,
He soar'd but slowly, stopping as he went ; 959
But when advanc'd he earth's attraction leaves,
A radiant cloud the heav'nly guest receives :
Swifter than thought his bright attendants move,
And shortly join the waiting throngs above.

Their Leader, there unnumber'd hosts await,
Drawn out before Heav'n's adamant gate. 965

From east to west their glitt'ring squadrons shine,
And angel forms compos'd the glorious line.

“ He comes”—at his approach a shout was given,
A shout which echoed through the vault of Heav’n.

Yet no display of this celestial show, 970

Though far exceeding all that mortals know,

Made him forget the friends he left behind,

Or quench'd his strong affection for mankind.

Amid these joys he parted from his friends,

Who speechless gaze, and kneel while he ascends.

But here the everlasting gates divide, 976

And shut to seat him by his Father's side.

One look he gave which wond'ring love express'd,

And sent two angels to impart the rest ;—

To say—"Your Lord, who thus to Heav'n ascends,

"Commands that here your fruitless gazing

ends ;—* 981

“ That him exalted, whom you vainly mourn,

“ Full on the clouds your eyes shall see return

" To judge th' assembled world, nor judge alone,

"You all assessors near his mighty throne." † 985

* Acts, i. 11.

† Matt. xix. 28. Luke, xxii. 30.

Thus soon or late the awful hour must come,
When men and angels shall receive their doom.
Then the last fire to atoms shall disperse
The beauteous Poem of the universe ;
Which heavenly art far lovelier will restore ; 990
And death and evil shall then be known no more.

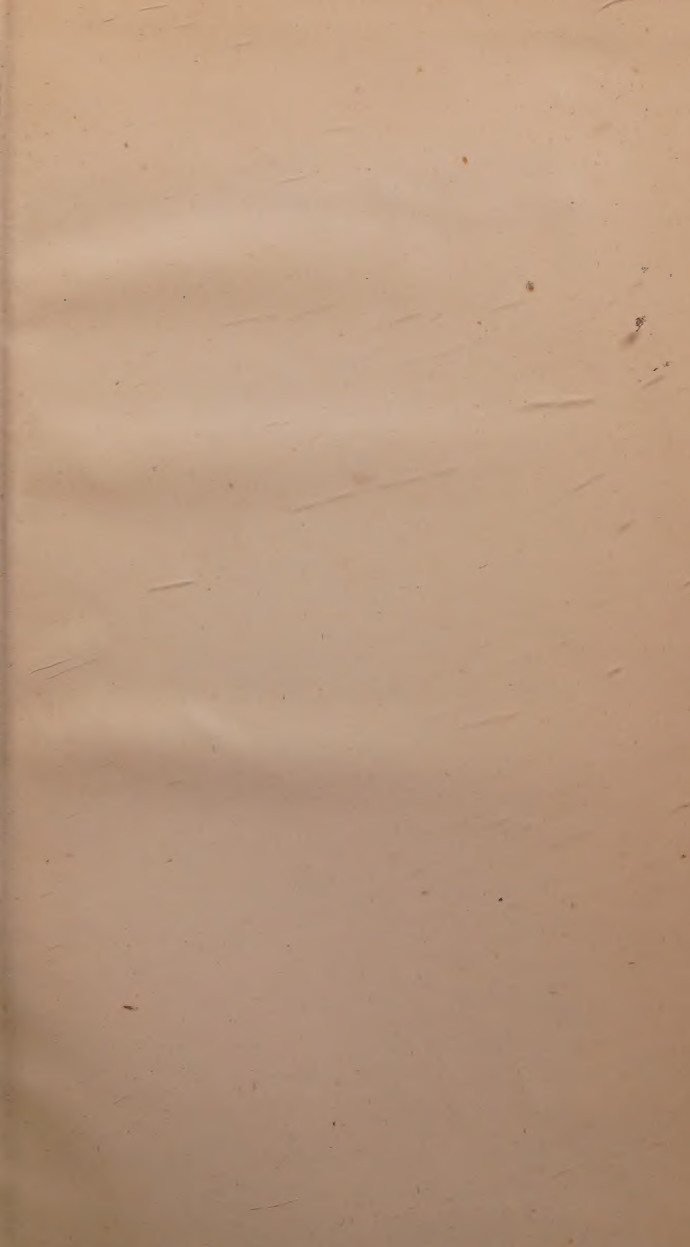
Straight from the mount these witnesses retir'd,
Pleas'd with those proofs they wanted and desir'd,
And at Jerusalem, with one accord, 991
In prayer and praise address'd their common Lord.
Christ, as he promis'd, their petitions heard,
And all that power which mark'd their deeds
conferr'd ;
To all their toils his miracles adjoin'd, 998
And thus confirm'd them to instruct mankind.

THE END.

A. PARIS, Printer, Took's Court,
Chancery Lane, London.

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